

AVADHANA VIDYA ARAMBHA VIKASALU

Telugu:- Dr. Rallabandi Kavitha Prasad

English : Dr. G Umapathi

Akula Krishna

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**AVADHANA VIDYA
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FOREWORD

Avadhanam is a literary feat popular from the medieval era in India. It was originated and primarily cultivated among Telugu poets. It involves extempore improvisation memorization and reproduction of poems by Avadhami using specific themes, metres forms or words on demand from a group of task masters (Known as 'Pruchhakas'). It requires immense memory power and tests a person's (Avadhami's) capability of performing mutiple literary tasks simultaneously. All the tasks are memory intensive and demand an in-depth knowledge of literature and prosody. The tasks vary from making up a poem spontaneously to keeping a count of a bell ringing at random or recalling all the names given at random. No external memory aids are allowed while performing these tasks except the person's mind. Avadhanam as such can be considered as the 'Divided Attention' as it is the highest level of attention.

Avadhanam peculiar to Telugu literature alone spread to Sanskrit and Kannada literatures also with the passage of time. The present book 'AVADHANAVIDYA' originally written by a versatile scholar and noted avadhami Sri Rallabandi Kavitha Prasad in Telugu has been translated into English by two eminent writers-1 Sri Akula Krishna, Rtd. Lecturer in English, known for his volumious translation work from English to Telugu and vice versa and 2. Dr. Guruguntla Umapathy retired reader in zoology known for his passionate work of translation. The efforts made by these writers in retaining the Telugu flavour and essence in translating the book into English are commendable. All out efforts have been made to bring all the nuances of Avadhanam as enunciated by the original writer to the notice of the people who cannot read the original script in Telugu to appreciate the nature and scope of avadhanam in full measure. Utmost care has been evinced not to skip all relevant and salient features of Avadhanam while translating the book into English. As such the two translators deserve sincere commendation .

It is fervently hoped that the book will surely cater to the need of non-telugu readers in catching up with the sole objective of the much awaited translation. I sincerely thank the two revered translators for thier benevolent gesture in offering me this rare privilege of writing this foreward.
With best compliments....

Sd/-

(E. RANGANNA)

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DEDICATION

**Dedicated to the members of
Late Rallabandi Kavitha Prasad's family...**

Smt. R. Nagini Devi

Sri. R. Ramakoteswara Raju

Sri. R. Samvaran Kashyap

FOREWORD

Ashtavadhanam is an ancient, adventurous, extraordinary, exclusive extemporal and a unique literary exercise that exposes the eminence of the literary excellence of a poet, known as Avadhaani who encounters eight learned scholars and well-versed versifiers in Sanskrit and Telugu, known as pundits or pruchhakas, who are on a par with himself.

Avadhanam finds its roots way back into the 13th century and eventually it evolved into various stages of eminence involving increased number of pundits to be faced by the Avadhaani from eight to eighteen, hundred and one thousand and the resultant processes are known as ashtadasavadhanam, shatavadhanam, and sahasraavadhanam respectively.

Here is a book in English on this literary feat. The process and procedure of Avadhanam have been vividly described in it.

I have got the privilege of going through its manuscript and despite being a translation I felt its text as if I was going through the original itself which was penned by the learned scholar Mr Rallabandi Kavitha Prasad.

Writing a book on such a topic of immense depth is undoubtedly a difficult job, but the task of translating it into another language makes the author seldom find it hard to bring to realization effectively. Even an accomplished translator cannot do justice to it, unless he or she possesses a certain proficiency in both the languages and also an adept at transmitting the soul of its original into the translation. And, as for me, the combined effort of this writers duo viz. Mr Akula Krishna, a professor (rtd.) in English, a versatile writer-cum-translator and Dr. G Umapathy, a reader (rtd.) in Zoology, an eminent scholar-cum-writer of several novels to his credit in depicting and elucidating this literary feat-an exclusive feature of the Telugu language - is highly admirable and really praiseworthy.

Let others too appreciate this work and the endeavor went into its creation.

(K. LAXMIKANTH)
M.A., Litt, LL.B.,
Advocate
Kurnool.

OUR WORD

“A thing of beauty is a joy for ever” said English poet John Keats. William Worsworth showed how to see and enjoy (the) “Nature”. Dr. Rallabandi Kavithaprasad, a renowned avadhanam, showed deeply, extensively and extraordinarily the genre of Telugu literature “Avadhanam” in his voluminous book “Avadhana Vidya, Aarambha Vikasalu” to the literary world of Telugu language. Actually it is his thesis.

In Telugu Literature the genre of Avadhanam is in vogue for the past several centuries. The central Government of India, recognised Telugu language as one of the ancient languages. This unique art of avadhanam is frequently heard in Telugu and Sanskrit languages. But it may or may not be present in other languages of our country. In Telugu it is the soul of the language. It struck to our mind that this attractive unique process of avadhanam should be known to the scholars of the other languages of the country. With this idea in mind, we took the task of free-style translation of the book (and definitely not a true translation) “Avadhana Vidya, Aarambha Vikasalu”, written by Dr. Rallabandi Kavitha Prasad, a renowned avadhanam into English as it happens to be the common language of all the people.

Eventhough our fields of study are different - Dr. Guruguntla Umapathy, Reader in Zoology (Rtd.) Sri Akula Krishna, a literature in English (Rtd.) - we are fascinated and attracted towards this unique process of avadhanam which tests the talent of memory power, mental alertness and presence of mind of a person Viz., Avadhanam. As we are not Telugu literature students, we cannot also describe deeply about the book as we are not competent and therefore attempted to write the salient features of the chapters of the book to the best of our ability.

Translation is also an art like other arts. The translator must have dexterity in both the languages. Every translator tries to bring out a good work of art whatever be the genre, whether prose, poetry, novel or drama. Avadhanam is a different genre from the above genres though it is related to poetry. Avadhanam is very difficult to translate into English as the terminol-

ogy used in it is very strange and unfamiliar especially the words like dattapadi, Vyasthakshari, Nisiddakshari, Nysthakshari etc. We don't know how far we are successful in this endeavour and it is upto the readers to judge. We always welcome constructive criticism

At the outset we thank late Dr.Rallabandi Kavitha Prasad's family members, Smt.R.Nagini Devi, Sri Ramakoteswara Raju, and Sri Samvaran Kashyap, for readily accepting to give permission to translate into English and publish the book "Avadhanam Vidya, Aarambha Vikasalu".

We thank Sri Gandluri Dattatreya Sarma Garu, Ashtavadhani and Sathavadhani for giving us valuable suggestions. He is a source of inspiration for taking up this project.

We thank Sri E.Ranganna Garu, PGT, English, Kendriya Vidyalaya Kurnool and Sri K.Lakshmikanth Garu, M.A.Litt., L.L.B, Advocate, Kurnool for immediately accepting to write foreword to this book.

We also thank Dr.Girija Mohan babu for his valuable suggestions.

We also thank Sri Krishna for the DTP Work.

Dr. Guruguntla Umapathy
Sri Akula Krishna

Dr. Rallabandi Kavitha prasad, the original writer of the Telugu version - "Avadhanam Vidya, Aarambha Vikasalu

Dr. Rallabandi Kavitha Prasad in his performance of Avadhanam at Boudha nagar chowrastha in Hyderabad said that for the sake of Telugu language, the poem should be taken to the masses. He opined that for the development of Telugu language Avadhanam is needed.

"Poem (Padyam) faded away, Revitalise poem and poem inhibits development" are some of the opinions which were propagated. Actually the poem which is already popular in the masses must be taken still further and propagated, thought the gathered messes in the meeting.

Poem should not be read within oneself. It should be read loudly meaningfully and with expression and enthusiasm and it should stimulate energy in the Opposite audience. If one hears the poem of Rallabandi avadhanam people become enthusiastic with hair and shoulders swelling. His book reveals that Avadhanam is an art and in the heart of this art, there will not be a beast but a god who resides.

This book is a thesis which contains extreme standard of six chapters on avadhanam. Power of sound, power of memory, power of meaning, power of wit, power of figure of speech, power of imagination and expression, power of concentration and the power of mono,bi and trigamous processes and presentation of secrets, all such skills and activities are all shown in Avadhanam.

Not only for a literacy scholar but a student, farmer labourer, business person, leader, artist, clerk, soldier, driver, cook and cobbler, all these require concentration or avadhanam. One should be always alert in his profession.

For this practice is necessary. "Through practice Avadhanam education is learnt," says avadhanam citing Yogi Vemana. On one occasion Dr. Rallabandi Kavitha Prasad recited at a stretch three hundred and sixty poems in one hour in Ravindra Bharathi hall in Hyderabad. He is serving the mother of Telugu language in this way. Even to day atleast one hundred sathakalu, (Sathakam means hundred poems) another hundred books with poems are being published per annum. Eventhough some papers deliberately avoid publishing poems, this very poem is seen in Avadhanalu, it rolls on the tongues of the people, in the drama theatres,in different channels of electronic media, and in solving the riddles in Doordarshan etc.

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CHAPTER - I

THE EDUCATIVE STRUCTURE OF

‘AVADHANAM ‘ITS HISTORY

CHAPTER - I

THE EDUCATIVE STRUCTURE OF 'AVADHANAM' ITS HISTORY.

Fine arts are five in number. They are Poetry, Music, Dance, Painting and Sculpture. Of these five, poetry is the best type of learning. In literary world the genre of Avadhanam depicted poetry as an exhibitory art.

It is unique thing that the genre in Telugu language has been in vogue for hundreds of years. Really it is a very rare genre.

The word "Avadhanam" is frequently heard in Telugu and Sanskrit languages. In other languages of the country, this unique process may or may not be present. But in Telugu it is the soul of the language. 'Avadhanam' means concentration of mind. Mind putting all its energy on a particular matter is called concentration. Such a state is called "Avadhanam". Attentiveness or alertness is 'Avadhanam'. In doing a work with full of concentration or alertness is Avadhanam.

"Asthavadhanam" is one among 64 fine arts. The state of Avadhanam is attained by Chaste persons who perform or practise it in a lonely place at midnight probably from 3A.M.to 6 A.M. (4th Yamam). But it can be attained by practice without any reference to place and time regulations. It is the opinion of the poets. Avadhanam can also be explained as mind mingling with the matter.

In the 17th Century 20 types of Avadhanam were popular among people. In the 21st Century there are 50 types of Avadhanams. The word Avadhanam is mentioned in various ways in Telugu literature like "Kiratharjuneyam", "Mahabharat", The History of Chitrangada, Srinatha's "Sivarathri Mahatyram", "Tenali Ramakrishna's "Udbhataradhy Charitra" etc., In 1850 Sri Madabhushi Venkatacharyulu conducted the Avadhanam in a beautiful manner. Later Thirupathi Venkata Kavulu (The Twin poets) popularized this genre. The Avadhanam learning has its roots in Vedam. It is the centre for all secularistic and non-secularistic forms of education in India. Indians believe that Vedam is the standard of all sciences. Indians even tolerate the arguments on the non-existence of God, but they don't

tolerate if the Vedic standards are not accepted. In the Vedic times itself pundits recognised avadhanam of Voice and avadhanam of letters.

In the courts of the Kings Avadhanees of Vedam used to enjoy the worship. But the poets were praised lesser than them. Therefore the poets were envious about them. Probably Avadhana education might have originated out of this jealousy.

If Vedavadhanam was originated for the protection of the divine and sublime vedas, Avadhanam was originated for the propagation of poetry. Therefore the number '8' in avadhanam of Vedam is used in literary process as "Ashtavadhanam". What ever it may be, for the origin of Avadhana education the primary root is avadhanam of Vedam. Avadhanam is an indicator of powerful, mental state. If a person is in a powerful state of mind, all his acts are Avadhanam acts only.

Avadhanam is recognized as retentive memory. Avadhanam is mainly based on retentive memory of mind. This retentiveness is attained through concentration of mind.

The Powers of Avadhanam:-

For performing Avadhanam certain powers are needed.

- 1) Retentive Power (Dharana Sakthi) or Memory Power.
- 2) Mono-bi trigamous powers (or) grasping powers.
- 3) The Power of poetry.
- 4) Extempore poetry (Aasu)
- 5) Retentiveness of Ancient and Modern Poems.
- 6) Knowledge of Dictionary.
- 7) Knowledge of grammar.
- 8) Other Powers.

1) Retentive Power (Dharana Sakthi) :-

The mind in a state of acute concentration is very powerful. That power is Avadhanam. Devoid of remembrance, the conduct of Avadhanam will not be in a proper order. For example, if a student reads a book several times without any concentration, it will not reach his brain.

By concentration the cerebrum or forebrain centres in the brain are activated. The brain stores several matters. It identifies and exhibits each and every matter depending on the need. That is why the brain is called “Dharanavathi”. It retains the matters. But all the matters retained in the brain will not strike to the mind. The brain has 3 powers. They are Receptive or grasping power (2) Retentive Power (3) The power of repetition. The grasping power or receptive power means understanding any matter. The remembrance power or retentive power means the matter that is stored in the brain. The repetitive power means expressing the matter whenever needed. Many believe that reception and remembrance are one and the same. But grasping every thing need not be stored in the brain. The mind stores what it wants. The mind has five bases.

1. **Kshiptham**:- The Power of storing or registering the matter that is needed. In other words preserving the matter.

2. **Mudham** :- The power of discarding the needed one without noticing or paying attention.

3. **Vichiptham**:- The Power of discarding the unwanted thing from inside.

4. **Eakagram** :- The Power of concentrating on a particular thing.

5. **Nirudham**:- The power of resisting the unwanted thing.

Of these five bases the power of concentration is very important (Eakagram) for Dharana or retention.

The brain has the capacity to store several crores of items. Similarly it has the capacity to regulate by its impulses the uncontrolled activities taking place in the body. In today's computers there is a natural way of imparting nearly 4 lakh commands per second. They are called as “Pentium-4”.

In America IBM'S Larex the “Live more National lab of California” has developed a computer which receives 136.8 crore commands per second. Above this Japanese have developed a computer which received 10^{16} commands per second. The Super Computer “Param” receives 10^{16} commands per second. The brain of man can perform the work of several

thousands of Super Computers. But the commands should be fed in proper order. Feeding or imparting commands in such a way is a skill.

Not only in Literature but also in other fields like Mathematics and other Scientific studies the brain performs extra ordinary wonders. In Literature “Avadhanam genre” is one of the several wonders that the brain performs.

2. **Mono-Bi-Trigamous Powers**

If a person hears a particular matter and repeats the same as it is, it is called Monogamous power. It is a type of learning. The matter may be a poem song, word, mantra or sound, Hearing and immediately repeating it is a mind power. If a person hears twice a matter and repeats, it is called bigamous power. If he hears thrice and repeats, it is Trigamous power. Some believe that this power is an inborn quality. Some people hear the matter and repeat it and forget afterwards. This is called temporary memory. Contrary to this some people retain the matter permanently and it is called permanent memory.

For the monogamous persons the power that they get is due to the concentration of mind. In poetry the performer listens to the matter shot at him by pruchaka (Task Master) (a person specially meant to shoot questions) and repeats in the same manner in the form of poem with its metre-scale (chandassu) and remembers within himself. Actually it is a very extraordinary power. In poetry the Avadhani (A person who performs Avadhanam) requires monogamous power to a large extent. While in the process of remembering, if this monogamous power doesn't co-operate with him, the remembering power gets affected. Therefore in the powers of Avadhanam that the Avadhani possesses, monogamous power is one of them.

3. **The Power of Poetry:**

For the performer of Avadhanam especially people who perform “Ashtavadhanam” (Avadhanam with eight task masters (or

Pruchakas) and Satavadhanam (Avadhanam with hundred task masters (or) Pruchakas) the power of poetry is very important.

4. Extempore Poetry (Aasu Kavithadharana)

Extempore poetry is very important for Avadhanees who perform Ashtavadhanam and Satavadhanam. The word “Aasu” means speed. That which moves fast is called Aasuvu. The related word “Asugamu” means an Arrow. An arrow moves very fast. Spontaneously the recital of poetry is ‘Aasuvu’. In this spontaneous flow, the poet or Avadhani is given a subject and the metre-scale (Chandassu). He has to recite these at a great speed. So here the Time also plays a factor. So the Chariot of Aasu has three reins or ropes, i.e. Subject, metre scale and Time. Therefore Avadhani has to run this chariot successfully. If he misses any of them the free extempore poetry gets curtailed. In this spontaneous, recital of poetry, the poet or Avadhani will be comfortable if the subject is known. He will excel in such a situation. If the subject is not known the flow of poetry becomes pale and uninteresting. Similarly in the best type of spontaneous flow, the poet chooses the most comfortable metre-scale in which he is very fond of and excels.

The selection of words in Aasu (Extempore poetry) is also another important factor. The ancient poets like Vemulawada Bhimakavi, Srinadhudu, Peddanna, Bhattumurthy, and Tenali Ramakrishna are very efficient in choosing the right type of words in ‘Aasu’ (Extempore poetry). Therefore for an Avadhani the power of extempore poetry is very important. The show of Avadhanam gets affected if this extempore recital of poetry is not performed well.

5. The Retention of Ancient and modern poems:-

It is important that the Avadhani should remember not only his own poems but ancient poet’s poems, writings, their books of hundred verses (Sathakalu) and modern poet’s hundreds of poems. Then only the poem (in the performance) runs in a good flow. If he has this capacity the extempore of poetry glitters, A Vedavadhani (An Avadhani who is a master

of Vedas) feels comfortable if he remembers the Vedas. Similarly an Avadhani feels comfortable if he remembers the poems. Sri Garikapati Narasimha Rao, a renowned Ashtavadhani, Satavadhani and Sahasra vadhani remembers and recites all the 1116 poems in his (own work) “Sagaraghosha”.

6. Acquaintance with Dictionary:-

An Avadhani should have a very good knowledge of the dictionary. He should be in good touch with ancient treatises like “Amarakosam”, Gurubala Prabhodhika”, Medini” “Dictionary of the world”, “Nanardha Ratnamala” and so on. Not only that, he should be in acquaintance with the words of these treatises, he should have the capacity to remember them. He should have the power to use them according to the need. Especially in exercises like “Solving the riddle or problem” (Samasya Puranam), Dattapadi, and “Nishiddakshari”, the knowledge of dictionary becomes very useful to him. Not only that, if the Avadhani uses a new word or a new term in a meeting, the people appreciate and applaud the Avadhani.

7. Knowledge of Grammar :-

In the meetings of the Avadhani the Pruchakas (Task Masters) are very knowledgeable Pundits. Even among the audience, renowned pundits and poets are seen. If a word is not used in a proper way, he will be subjected to criticism, pseudo words will not be accepted by task masters and by the audience in the meetings. Previously several Avadhanam processes failed because of the bad usage of words.

8. Others:-

In addition to all the items discussed above, if the Avadhanam has a very good sense of humour, beautiful voice, good facial aura, all these become additional attractive powers. Even if these qualities are not there, yet he can impress the audience with his extraordinary efficiency.

The Era Of Avadhanam :-

The era of Avadhanam can be divided as follows.

From Narayana Bhattu (1050) to 1850 – Starting phase of Avadhanam.

1850 – 1950 – Bright phase of Avadhanam.

1950 – 1985 – Dull phase of Avadhanam.

1985 – onwards till date – Rejuvenated phase of Avadhanam.

In the starting phase the Avadhanam process was in a primary stage.

In the bright phase the Avadhanam was being performed among the knowledgeable people.

In the dull phase, because of the advent of free-verse and poetry songs (or writings of songs) the traditional poems took a back seat.

In rejuvenated phase of Avadhanam, again several forms of Avadhanam, like ‘Satha’ or Hundred ‘Dwisatha’ (Two hundred), ‘Sahasra’ (One thousand) ‘Dwisaahasra’ (Two thousand), ‘Dwigunitha’ (Dimath ematical), Chathurgunitha’ (Tetra Mathematical) and ‘Bahugunitha’ (Several mathematical) developed again. The reason for this is that there is ambiguity in the free verse, and people develop a liking towards ancient poetry i.e. poems (Padyalu) written according to the metre (Chandassu) (ancient poetry).

The History of Avadhana Performances in the beginning (1854-1929):-

1. Madabhushi garu performed “Ashtavadhanam” in 1854-55.
2. Kandukuri Veeresalingam garu performed “Ashtavadhanam” in 1874.
3. Devulapalli Subbaraya Sastry performed Ashtavadhanam in the year 1879.
4. Tirupathi Venkata Kavulu (Twin Poets) performed Ashtavadhanam in 1891.
5. Kasi Krishnamacharyulu garu performed Ashtavadhanam in 1892.
6. In 1896 Karyampudi Rajamannar garu performed Ashtavadhanam at Bhattiprolu.(A.P.)
7. Mantripreggada Bhujanga Rao garu performed “Ashtavadhanam in 1899.
8. Tirumala Bukkapatnam Srinivasacharyulu garu performed in 1903 in Madras.
9. In 1909 Venkata Ramakrishna / Poets performed Avadhanam at Pitapuram. (A.P)

10. Pisupati Chidambara Sastry garu performed Avadhanam in 1910 at Agimpalli. (A.P.)

11. Nandagiri Seshagiri Rao garu performed Avadhanam at Angaluru (Krishna District) in 1913.

12. From 1924 upto 1929 several Avadhana pundits performed Asthavadhanam.

13. Tirumala Bukkapatnam Raghavacharyulu garu performed Ashtavadhanam in English in 1872-73.

How to develop the learning of Avadhanam :-

Sri. C.V. Subbanna most popular and renowned avadhani in his “the learning process of Avadhanam (Avadhana Vidya) discussed in the following way.

- 1) Is learning of Avadhanam a culture of previous birth?
- 2) Is learning of Avadhanam a hereditary quality?
- 3) Can Avadhanam be learnt through a Master (Gurumukham).
- 4) can the learning of Avadhanam be got by worship?
- 5) Can the Avadhana learning be attained through the use of Medicines?
- 6) Can it be got by practice?
- 7) Can it be a dream felt experience?

Many discussions were held and they have concluded in the following way.

In poets the previous birth culture has a role to play, and it is not attained through heredity and, or through Master some clues can be learnt and not entire learning. And only concentration be achieved through worship, and it can be attributed to any God (Devatha). The medicines are useful only to activate the brain and the practice reduces the nervousness, and on some occasions the Avadhanam gets the dream-felt experiences.

Different types of Avadhanas:-

There are very many Avadhanams which can be divided into different categories.

- 1) Avadhanas related to Vedas.
 - 1) Vedavadhanam (2) Swaravadhanam (Avadhanam of Music)
 - 3) Vedakshara Avadhanam (Avadhanam of letters of Vedas).

2). Avadhanas Related to Literature:

There are very many in this type and all those are very popular in Avadhanas.

- 1) Ashtavadhanam, Dwigunitha, Trigunitha, Chaturgunitha Dasagunitha, Shodasagunitha, Prathyavruatha, Vichitrashta Avadhanalu.
- 2) Dasavadhanam (3) Ashtadasavadhanalu (4) Sathavadhanam, Ardha Sathavadhanamu, Dwigunitha, Panchagunitha, Sahasra, Dwisahasra, Khandika Sathavadhanam, Atyadhuvitha Sathavadhanam, Pada Sathavadhanam, Sathavidhavadhanam, (5) Sahasravadhanam (6) Pancha Sahasravadhanam (7) Navarasa Navavadhanam (8) Alankara Ashtavadhanam (9) Sahitya Prakriyavadhanam (1) Vachana Kavithaavadhanam (11) Ghatika-Sathagrandha Karanam (12) Samaya lekhini (13) Satha Lekhini Padya Sandhanam (14) Chathurvida Kavithva Vidyavadhanam (15) Ashta Bhasha Vysathakshara Avadhanam (16) Haasayavadhanam (17) Navaghanta Lekhanam (18) Kaavyavadhanam (14) Akshara Avadhanam (20) Dharanavadhanam.

3). Avadhanas Not related to Literature:-

Avadhanas related to the power of Remembrance only.

- 1) Ramayanavadhanam (2) Bhagavathgitha Avadhanam (3) Sahasra Namavadhanam (4) Sathakalasavadhanam (5) Sabdavadhanam.
- 4) Technical Avadhanams (Sankethika Avadhanams),
- 1) Nethravadhanam (2) Pushpavadhanam (3) Sushvavadhanam (4) Thrunavadhanam (5) Gamanavadhanam (6) Khadgavadhanam (7) Bhujavadhanam (8) Bhrukalavadhanam (9) Hastavadhanam (10) Angusthavadhanam (11) Ghantavadhanam (12) Chakravadhanam (13) Aksharamushtikavadhanam.

4) AVADHANAM RELATED TO SCIENCE :-

- 1) Ganithavadhanam (Sankhyavadhanam)
- 2) Jyothishya Avadhanam (3) Vydyashta Avadhanam
- 4) Akshara Ganithavadhanam.

5. AVADHANAM RELATED TO FINE ARTS :-

- 1). Naatyavadhanam (Avadhanam of dance)
- 2). Sangeethashtavadhanam (Ashtavadhanam of Music)
- 3). Chitrakala Ashtavadhanam (Ashtavadhanam of Painting)
- 4). Dhwanyanukarana Avadhanam (Avadhanam of Sound)
- 5). Chathuranga Avadhanam (Avadhanam of Chess)

CHAPTER - II

THE ART OF AVADHANA AND ITS VARIED FACETS IN VOGUE.

Avadhanam is a unique genre in Telugu language and literature. It developed several forms, not only in literature but also in areas unrelated to literature,. This genre has several adaptations such as dance and music Ashtavadhanas, Eye-related avadhanam (Netravadhanam), Medicine related ashtavadhanam (Vydyashtavadhanam), Ashtavadhanam of Astrology (Jyothisasthravadhanam), Mathematics related ashtavadhanam (Ganithasta avadhanam) Mimicry avadhanam etc., All these are just wheels of cultural chariot.

There may be several Avadhanam processes but among them most important ones are Ashtavadhanam and Sathavadhanam. These have become very popular.

Avadhanam is a show of eminence. It is a process which shows powers of mind and concentration. Ashtavadhana shows the concentration on eight items or factors. Ashtavadhanam was not related to literature in the beginning. It was only an entertainment or time pass process performed during the days of festivals like “Sivarathri”, an auspicious festival during which people observe “Jagarana” (sleepless ritual celebrated throughout night).

Ashtavadhana Structure – Beginning Stage :-

Returi Rangaraju performed Ashtavadhanam. The poems from “Bhanumathi Parinayam” said by Returi in his Avadhanam were most entertaining and amusing. Dr. Kambhampati Ramagopala Krishnamurthy garu in his thesis “Andhrula Avadhana Prakriya” has analysed the Ashtavadhana poem of Sri Returi.

In this poem let us observe the Ashtavadhana items.

- 1). **Vyasthakshari**:- It is indeed an entertainment process. In this, the split letters in a poem or in a sentence are given haphazardly. Avadhani is asked finally to explain in a proper order.

2). **Kramukasankhyakhyanam**:- In this, the betelnuts are thrown at the back of the Avadhani and asked him to tell the number of betelnuts thrown at him in the end.

3). **Writing in the ascending and descending order** :-

Avadhani is asked to write a poem or a slokam in the ascending or in the descending order. If it is given in the ascending order he should write in the descending order or if it is given in the descending order he should write in the ascending order.

4). **Agra Padya Grahana bhirakthi**:- **The receptive capacity of the poet just above the present one** :- In a poetic work (Kavyam) if the Avadhani recites a particular poem from any poetic work, he is asked to recite the poem just above it. Choosing poetic work doesn't depend on the will and wish of the pruchaka (Task Master). Choosing poetic work is purely the will of Avadhani as all poetic works are not within the reach of the Avadhani.

5). **Anavalokitha Sarikabhilekhanareethi**:- (Writing with the nail of the hand on the back of the Avadhani) :- A letter or a word is written on the back of the Avadhani with the nail of the hand and he is asked to tell what the word or letter it is. This process exhibits a lot of fun.

6). **Samasya (Solving the riddle)** :- This is mentioned in the Sixty four types of arts.

7). **Samudagranekshitha Chaturangabalakeli**:- (Playing Chess with more than one). Playing chess with more than one blind folded or is a blind fold chess.

In the type of Ashtavadhanam, the Vyasthakshari, Agrapadya grahanabhirakthi, and solving the riddle or Samasyapuram are related to literature only. The others are just meant for entertainment.

In Ashtavadhanam the number of entertainment items are decreased and gradually literature items are increased. This type of Avadhanam reached the courts of kings from the common public mass. On Sivarathri day, during Jagarana time (Holy sleepless night) the Avadhanam performed among the

public developed into platforms where the poets or pundits exhibited their calibre and eminence. Old items are replaced by new items. After Returi Rangaraju, the Avadhanam Characters were made to the Metre (Chandassu) in Telugu and Sanskrit languages. Tirupathi Venkata kavulu (Twin Poets) in 1892 described the Avadhanam items in the following way.

- 1). Kaavya Patanam (Reading of Poetic script)
- 2). Kavithvam (Poetry)
- 3). Sastraardham (Knowledge of scripts).
- 4). Puranam (Knowledge of Mythology)
- 5). Lowkika Prasangam (Discussions among the public).
- 6). Vyasthakshari (Splitting of poem or sentence)
- 7). Chathurangam (Chess)
- 8). Pushpa Gananam (Counting of flowers).

In this, except chess and counting of flowers, the rest are all related to literature. Lowkika Prasangam is also not related to literature. To disturb the concentration of Avadhani the Task master uses this type of method. Later on this is called Aprasthutha Prasangam i.e., Interfering with uncanny witty speeches.

In the “Vanamala Ashtavadhanam” performed by Tirupathi Venkata Kavulu the following items are mentioned.

- 1). Nishiddhakshari (prevention of particular use of letter)
- 2). Vyasthakshari (Splitting of the poem or word)
- 3). Akasapuram (Purana or Mythology that is no where found)
- 4). Pushpa Gananam (Counting of flowers)
- 5). Vyakaranitho Prasangam (Discourse of scripts on grammar)
- 6). Kaavya Patanam (Reading of Poetic work)
- 7). Thripada Samasya (Riddle of Three stanzas)
- 8). Ekapada Samasyalu rendu (Two riddles of a single stanza)

Sri Veluri Varu performed ashtavadhanam in a different style. In this style not only items of avadhanam, the number of task masters are taken into consideration and performed the Avadhanam. Even this type of

Avadhanam is also called as “Ashtaavadhanam”. In this type he performed using 3 slokas + 5 poems + Counting of the ringing of bell + counting of the flowers. With these items he performed the Avadhanam with 10 task masters and also with discussions among the common public item. He therefore performed with 11 task masters. But instead of calling it Ekadasa Avadhanam (Avadhanam performed with eleven task masters) he called it “Ashtavadhanam” only.

There were many items numbering nearly 35 in the performance of Ashtavadhanam. In those days the pundits among the audience gave prominence to the discussions of grammar, solving of different riddles and pure words of sound. Other common people used to enjoy the counting of ringing bell (Ghantagananam) Flower counting (Pushpa gananam), Akasa purana (Mythology in the sky i.e. Mythology that is no where found, story and Mathematics of the mind, (Medhoganitham).

The time taken for performing Ashtavadhanam used to be 4 hours. This time depends on the extempore performance of the Avadhani Tirupathi Venkata Kavulu poets used to perform in 2-3 hours. Sri Venkata Ramakrishna poets performed in one hour ten minutes.

Sri Mantri Pragada Bhujanga Rao performed in 5 hrs. Sri Kandukuri Veeresalingam garu performed in 2 hrs.

“Ashtavadhanam” gradually evolved systematically with the addition of several new items. It started with 8 items initially and developed into 35 items and also developed into “Dwigunitha,” “Trigunitha”, “Chathurgunitha”, “Panchagunitha”, “Dasagunitha” and “Shodasagunitha” types. These are nothing but doubling or increasing the number of items in “Ashtavadhanam.

But in “Dwigunitha”, “Trigunitha” and “Chathurgunitha” types the items were only eight, Sri Madagula Nagaphani Sarma garu performed “Dasagunitha Ashtavadhanam” at Anantapur (A.P) in 1986.

“Shodasagunitha Ashtavadhanam” was performed by Sri Medasani Mohan garu in 1986 at Vijayawada (A.P). In this Avadhanam the number of items are eight only but the number of Task Masters (Pruchakas) is 128. In the history of avadhanam this is the first “Shodasagunitha

Ashtavadhanam”. In ashtavadhanam, keeping the number of items at eight and increasing the number of Task Masters (Pruchakas) is the evolutionary trend that happened later.

“Ashta Dasavadhanam (Ashtavadhanam with 18 items):- In 1988, Rallabandi Kavithaprasad garu, the author of the present Telugu original book, performed this new type of Avadhanam. With 18 task masters (Pruchakas) and with 18 items the Avadhanam was performed at a time. So it is called astadasavadhanam.

2). **SATHAVADHANAM - INITIAL STORY :-** Pundits have used Asthavadhanam and later Sathavadhanam. But in literary world Sathavadhanam originated first. The word ‘Satha’ (Hundred) attracted many poets. In this one poet answers extempore for hundred task masters. The first Sathavadhanam was performed in 1285 in the court of “Kakatiya Kings”.

In the world of avadhanam 4 lady poets were prominent. They were Madhura Vani (1600-1631), Rama Bhadramba (1600-1630), Pasupuleti Rangajamma (1633-1673) and Krishnajamma (1633-1673). Usually in the field of poetry the number of ladies is very limited.

But to explain Sathavadhanam (Avadhanam with 100 task masters or pruchakas) in a nutshell and the rules imposed can be seen in the following manner.

In sathavadhanam there will be 100 task masters (Pruchakas) present. They are well learned pundits. They give the items to Avadhani at a time. This item may be Description (Varnana) riddle (Samasya), Dattapadi, any type and these will be of their choice only. Metre(Scale) also will be given out of their choice. The avadhani has to tell each stanza to every one of the hundred task masters. Likewise if he completes the first round of hundred stanzas, in the second round the task masters will not talk anything. The avadhani, after seeing them should start giving second stanza by remembering what he has given to each task master in the first round. In this way he has to complete the second stanza to hundred task masters.

Likewise he has to complete the third stanza in the third round. Similary the fourth stanza in the fourth round. Finally avadhani has to tell each poem to each task master. This is a complete sathavadhanam or avadhanam with hundred pruchakas.

Rules in Sathavadhanam :-

- (1). While in the ongoing process of giving a stanza, the avadhani should not ask the pruchaka or the task master, what his matter is, shoud not request him to repeat, should not ask him the on going round and also should not request him to read the first stanza again. Such discussion should not be entertained as it indicates his weakness in the memory power.
- (2). All the matter that a task master gives, the avadhani should keep them in his memory only and should not write on a paper. During the course of avadhanam, the avadhani should not keep a paper or a pencil in his hand or in the pocket and nothing of that sort should he seen.
- (3). When the pruchakas or task masters ask questions, the avadhani should give proper diplomatic answer.
- (4). While giving the last stanza he should not murmur the previous stanzas loudly.
- (5). Except on some occasions and on some matters only the avadhani should not ask to cancel the previous stanza completly or to some extent as this will reduce his reputation.
- (6). Avadhani should keep the entire stanza in his mind only, and while telling the same, he should not repeat several times.
- (7). What matter is asked, he should reveal it in the stanza only and nothing extra should he entertained.
- After completing the first stanza to all the hundred task masters, the second stanza should start with the first task master. Likewise the third and fourth stanzas separately.
- (8). At any one place i.e. near any one task master, the avadhani should not take too much time to complete the stanza.

(9). The defects in the applicability and the defects in the grammar should be discarded.

(10). If the avadhani forgets the matter and to regain the memory he should not indulge in the eye contact signs with the friends or should not depend on the discussions.

Today Madabhushi Garu, Tirupati Venkata Kavulu, Kopparapu brothers, Rajasekhara Venkatasesha Kavulu, Karyampudi Rajamannar, Avvari Subramanya Sastry, Krishnamacharya, Pandrangi Rama Rao, Pisupati Chidambara Satry, Seshadri Ramana Poets, Gadepalli Veera Raghava Sastry, etc., performed Sathavadhanam. Sri C.V.Subbanna garu performed Sathavadhanam at Proddatur on 8-10-1950.

MODERN DAY SATHAVADHANALU :- (AVADHANAM WITH 100 ITEMS) :- After 1985, suddenly the Sathavadhanalu have changed drastically. The freedom of Task Masters is lost. In Sathavadhanam there were 25 riddles (Samasyalu); 25 Dattapadulu; 25 descriptions (Varnalu) 25 extempore poetry, (Aasuvulu) and one Intervening with uncanny witty speech (Aprasthuta Prasangam) have started. Similary these types of items are varied with different numbers.

When we observe, we can find a lot of difference in the Sathavadhanalu performed before 1950 and after 1950. There are nearly 28 differences.

Sathavadhanam - That day - Today

| The characters of Sathavadhanam before 1950 | The characters of Sathavadhanam after 1985 |
|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The number of Task Masters (Pruchakas) numbering 100 is very rare. 2. Pundits and poets act as task masters. 3. The debates of sound and grammar were very many. 4. There was enthusiasm to win in the task masters. 5. The president in the avadhanam used to interfere only on the occasions of dispute. 6. The courts of kings and the zamindars used to arrange the meetings of Avadhanam. 7. Pundits are the propaganda vehicles. The News papers meticulously write about the defects. 8. Task masters can choose any item. They have that type of freedom. 9. There is no classification in the task masters. 10. If any special guest arrives such people are felicitated in the courts of kings and zamindaris. They used to enjoy Avadhanam. 11. There is no decorations 12. There is no mike-system 13. There is no other technical support. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The member of task masters is definitely 100. 2. The number of pundits and poets is less. The literary lovers who are not concerned with Metre(scale) (Chandassu) act as task masters. 3. There is no such debates pertaining to sound and grammar. 4. There was curiosoty in the task-masters. 5. The president acts as a mediator encouraging the avadhani and sometimes acts as a commentator also. 6. Such Avadhana meetings were being arranged by the public institutions. 7. The pundits who know everything praise the defects and good features of Avadhanam. The journalists who don't have sufficient knowledge of literature write only praising the meeting of the Avadhani. The electronic media also do the same and usually eulogise saying "Avadhanam excelled". 8. The organisers decide and reveal the items to task masters even before and even print the pamphlets. |

14. The memory of poems is compulsory.
15. Through Avadhanam the literary eminence was being exhibited in the meeting.
16. The Avadhana meetings were held for the livelyhood of the avadhanees.
17. Much time was being taken for the organisation of sathavadhanam
18. The audiene used to tolerate the time-lag in Avadhanam.
19. The defects of the avadhani in Poorana (Solving) were being shown immediatly.
20. The speciality of the solving capacity of the avadhani was being praised.
21. The avadhana merits and demerits used come in a series in Newspapers.
22. The books of Avadhanalu are printed very late.
23. Dwisathavadhanalu (Avadhanalu with 2000 task masters) and pancha sathavadhanalu (in the 5000) never took place.
24. In the Avadhana meetings the caste and branch differences were blatantly seen.
25. There were disputes among Avadhanees. They were being exposed and (they were) published in newspapers.
26. In avadhana meetings riddles and Dattapadi are rarely seen. There
9. A new word is coined as "special task master" came into existance.
10. The people who occupy high positions are invited and felicitated. In the conduct of the meeting also they play a role and co-operate. They are treated as special task masters and they are requested to shoot questions.
11. The meeting hall of the Avadhanam is extensively decorated with colourful banners, flowers and electric lights.
12. Mike-system is compulsory.
13. Video and Audio recordings take place. Through computers DTP also is done.
14. Some perform the memory of poems. In this the pundits and crities show indifference.
15. The Avadhana meetings were held with the motive of making it successful.
16. For the propagation of poetic-education, entertainment and to some extent personal propagation Avadhana meetings were held.
17. The conduct of sathavadhanam takes place in Two days, some times even in one day sathavadhanam completes.
18. The audience did not tolerate the time-lag in avadhanam.
19. The president himself used to correct the defects of the avadhani. The task masters never

were no complicated riddles and Dattapadis.

27. The item interfering with witty speech (Aprasthatha prasangam) is not being considered as an important item.
28. There are no Invitation cards for Avadhanam.

dare to show the defects of avadhani.

20. Instead of the task master praising the speciality of the solving capacity of the avadhani, the president himself praises the avadhani even before.
21. Eventhough such articles are published in papers in a series they do not directly aim at the show of the avadhanam.
22. Avadhana poems and books are printed very quickly.
23. Today as there is no dearth of task masters Avadhanalu are taking place from Sathavadhanam to Dwi-sahasravadhanam (with 2000 pruchakas). Soon some pancha sahasravadhanam (with 50,000 pruchakas) may take place.
24. They are not seen any where today.
25. The disputes in Avadhanees was never being exposed.
26. In this time, complicated riddles and their applicability are very many. Even the Dattapadi was being given in a complicated manner.
27. The item, interfering with witty speech is the main attractive feature in modern Avadhana meetings.
28. The Invitation cards are being printed in an attractive manner.

- 3) **Sahasravadhanam (Avadhanam with 1000 items) Initial Variations:**- The Sahasravadhanam has come into prominence in the last decade of 20th century. The telugu people have enjoyed ashtavadhanam, Sathavadhanam and dwisathavadhanam. This Sahasravadhanam is another type of literary excellence exhibited by avadhani.

The Pundits who knew the structure of avadhanam say that this Sahasravadhanam is a memory related recital of one thousand poems. In this avadhani recites the poem stanza-wise in reply to 1000 task masters questions and then repeating the entire poem successfully to 1000 task masters. It is really a test of retentive power (Dharana sakthi) and its prowess.

The prominent name which appeared in the history of Sahasravadhanam was Prathivadi Bhayankara Raghavacharyulu in 1760. Even Tirupati Venkata Kavulu also performed Sahasravadhanam. These poets performed “Sathavadhanam” on 2-2-1892 at Kakinada (A.P). On that day they said that they can perform “Sahasravadhanam” in both Telugu and Sanskrit languages.

From 1995 to 2005, a total of 5 Sahasravadhanas took place.

- 1) Sri Medasani Mohan has performed Sahasravadhanam from 4-1-1996 to 22-1-1996 (19 days) at Tirupathi (A.P).
- 2) Sri Madugula Nagaphani Sarma performed from 2-2-1996 to 24-2-1996 (24 days) at Hyderabad.
- 3) Sri Garikapati Narasimha Rao performed from 15-5-1996 to 5-6-1996 (22 days) at Kakinada (A.P)
- 4) Sri Vaddiparti Padmakar performed from 10-5-2003 to 26-5-2003 (17 days) at Eluru (A.P).
- 5) Sri Kadimella Varapasad and Sri Kita Venkata Lakshmi Narasimham both performed from 9-5-2004 to 25-5-2004 (16 days) at Tanuku (A.P).

When the word “Sahasravadhanam” is mentioned the literary Pundits often ask interestingly “How is the memory power of the Avadhani”. Often people judge from Ashtavadhanam to Dwi-Sahasravadhanam, the calibre

of Avadhani in Extempore recital and memory power (Dhara-Dharana). If extempore recital is the body, then the memory power is the soul.

Types of retentive power of modern sahasravadhanalu :- There are 3 remembrance types of the Sahasravadhanam of the modern day. They are (1) Padya Puranantara Dharana (The remembrance power after the poem is completed).

2). Amsa Puranantara Dharana (The recalling / reproducing power after the given item is completed).

3). Akhanda Dharana (Infinite recalling / reproducing power. Commonly in ashtavadhana, multiple Astavadhanalu, sathavadhanalu and Dwi-Sathavadhanalu, only infinite remembrance power (Akhanda dharana) is used and the other two are rejected.

4). **EXPERIMENTS IN AVADHANAM:-** There are very many experiments performed in Avadhanam. We are giving here only the titles of the avadhanalu and we are not going deep into their description as we are not avadhanees and not competent to describe them. Our purpose is only to make a brief understanding of the unique process i.e. Avadhanam in Telugu and Sanskrit languages to other Non-telugu and Sanskrit people.

1). **Navarasa Navavadhanam :- (Nine kinds of passions)**

In this, nine task masters ask the Avadhani to describe the nine kinds of passions in a poem with their choice of the Metre-scale and item also.

2). **Alankaraashtavadhanam – (Ashtavadhanam on figures of speech):-** In this 8 task masters ask Avadhani to describe the figures of speech which they like, in the given metre (Chandassu) and in the given item of their choice in a poem.

3). **Sahitya Prakriya avadhanam :- (Avadhanam of literary Process):-**

The different types of genres in literature, the poem, the free-verse, Mini-free verse, story, Article, Criticism, Song and interfering speech – all these are included in the performance of Avadhanam.

4). **Vachana Kavitha Avadhanam:- (Avadhanam of free verse) :-**

This is done by Sri P.L.R.Swamy Acharya Bethavolu Varu said in an article that “Poem enlightens the mind. In free-verse there is no enlightenment of the mind. It stays at the reading stage only. “In this 100 free-verses are by-hearted and recited. Byheart is not a retentive power (Dharana Sakthi) and in this there is no originality seen.

5). **Dharanavadhanam:- (Avadhanam with memory power) :-**

The Scriptures (Sastras) say that without memory power there is no Avadhanam. Dr. Volukula Srinivasa Rao performed Dharanava dhanam. Here also it is by-hearted recital of poems and it is not Dharanava dhanam as it has no creativity.

6). **Haasyavadhanam(Avadhanam of Jokes) :-** Sri Sankara Narayana performed this. He performed it with 8 task masters. In this the task master puts a joke on an item. The Avadhani answers with a similar kind of joke. This completes 4 rounds with such jokes. This creates a lot of fun in the gathering. In this type of avadhanam, words with multiple meanings, tricky words, and words with irony play a major role and Sankara Narayana excels in this type of avadhanam. But in this even though there is creativity, there is no memory power which is the soul of avadhanam.

7). **Kaavyavadhanam :- (Avadhanam of poetic script)** Sri. Karri Nagarjunasri, performed Kaavyavadhanam on “Vasucharithra” (a Kaavyam or script). He has by-hearted the entire Vasucharithra. In this type of a avadhanam there is memory power well exhibited but there is no creativity.

8) **Avadhanam not related to literature :-** In the avadhanam which is not related to literature both the pundits and the common people enjoy the avadhanam to the maximum extent.

In this field, the avadhanam is divided into 4 types.

1) **DHARANAMATRA SAMBANDHAAVADHANALU :-**

(Avadhanalu related to the process of memory power).

- a). Bhagavadgeetha Avadhanam (Avadhanam of famous Bhagawad geetha).
- b). Sahasranamavadhanam (Avadhanam of 1000 names)

- c). Ramayanavadhanam (Avadhanam of Ramayanam)
- d). Sathakalasa Avadhanam (Aadhanam of 100 Vessels)
- e). Sabdhavadhanam (Avadhanam of sound).

2). **Sankeethika Avadhanalu (Avadhanam of Technical Indicators)**

- a). Neethravadhanam (Avaadhanam of the Eye).
- b). Bhrukalavadhanam (Avadhanam with eye-brows).
- c). Akshara mushtika Avadhanam (Avadhanam with fist)
- d). Angushta Avadhanam (Transmission of Letters with Thumb)
- e). Hastavadhanam (Transmission of letters with Hand)
- f). Gamanavadhanam (Avadhanam with the movement of legs and feet etc)
- g). Khadgavadhanam (Avadhanam with the movement of sword)
- h). Chakravadhanam (Transmitting the letters with the movement of wheel)
- i). Ghantavadhanam (Avadhanam with metal bell)
- j). Pushpavadhanam (Avadhanam with flowers)
- k). Bhujavadhanam (Avadhanam related to a tree).
- l). Thrunavadhanam (Avadhanam with grass-blades).
- m). Sushkhavadhanam (King Ramaraja Bhushan performed this).

3). **Sastra Sambandha Avadhanalu (Avadhanalu Related Science):-**

- a). Ganithavadhanam (Avadhanam of Mathematics)
- b). Jyothishavadhanam (Avadhanam related to Astrology)
- c). Vydyashta avadhanam (Ashtavadhanam related to medicine)
- d). Askhara Ganithavadhanam (Avadhanam of Counting letters in a line or poem)

4). **Kalaasambandha avadhanalu (Avadhanalu related fine arts):-**

- a). Naatyaavadhanam (Avadhanam of Dance)
- b). Sangeetha Ashtavadhanam (Ashtavadhanam of Musaic)
- c). Chithra Kalaashtavadhanam (Ashtavadhanam of Paining)
- d). Dhnanyanukarana Avadhanam (Avadhanam of Sound)
- e). Chatranga Avadhanam (Avadhanam of game chess).

CHAPATER - III

ITEMS OF AVADHANAAM - AN OBSERVATION

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1. Samasyaa Puuranam :-

The sage vatsayana stated about one 'Kavya Samasyaa Puranam' out of sixty four arts in 13th century B.C.Samasya(Riddle or Problem) took its origin prior to the origin of avadhaanam. It is well described with all the examples in "Amarakosa".

Samasya or riddle is given from the part of a stanza to test the knowledge of a poet, for the completion of samasya or riddle the poet must have both the talent and scholarhip. In addition to these two the poet must have quickness in completing the riddle. There is a gulf of difference between the poets who sit at home and complete the riddle and the poets who sit amidst the scholars on the stage and complete it. It is not that easy to complete 'riddle' spontaneously and eloquently.

Every week in the name of 'Sarasavinodini' solving the riddle has been broad casting over All India Radio since 1948. Television is also telecasting this programme. The poets take a week or a fortnight to complete the riddle. But in avadhaanam Avadhaani has to solve the riddle then and there.

'Solving the riddle' is an attractive feature in avadhanam. When the riddle is heard the president, the audience and prucchakaas think about it. Many think about the completion of riddle in their own way. But Avadhaani thinks about it in a different way. Contrary to the expectations of the audience, Avadhaani completes riddle in an interesting manner giving delight to one and all.

The riddles were called 'Kaiva padulu' in the past. They were conducted on the fasting nights of sivaratri, on the village pials, in marriages or among the literary circles. The poets don't bother about prosody metre and grammar.

What they require is the understanding capacity of 'the riddle'. They were experts in completing the riddle by their tricks.

It is a talk among the public that Mocharla venkanna had the talent of completing a hundred riddles per hour spontaneously.

Playing on Veena Rangajamma was completing riddles. Like this the poets were doing this task in their own style.

Classification of solving the riddles:-

The great satavadhaani Sri. C. V.Subbanna classified Samasyaas into fifteen types. Whereas Kambampati Rama Gopala Krishna Murthy classified them into 11 types.

Classification of C.V.Subbanna's riddles:-

- 1). Padamaasa vaakya Chamatkruti
- 2). Nuutana kalapana chamatkruti
- 3). Slesha Chamatkruti
- 4). Praasa Chamatkruti
- 5). Saanketika Chamatkruti
- 6). Adhikshepa Chamatkruti
- 7). Apahaasya Chamatkruti
- 8). Arthantaranyaasa Chamatkruti
- 9). Kaakuswara Chamatkruti
- 10). Sabdarthageta Chamatkruti
- 11). Lokokti Chamatkruti
- 12). Lokajanataa Chamatkruti
- 13). Pannaruktya Chamatkruti
- 14). Chaaritraka Chamatkruti
- 15). Chandoniguda Chamatkruti

Classification of K.R.G.K. Murthy's Samasyaas

- 1). Chaturtha Paadamaatra Samasya
- 2). TruteeyaaPaadumaatra Samasya
- 3). Arthapaada Samasya
- 4). Prathamapaada Samasya
- 5). Arthamkaani Samasya
- 6). Dushkara- Atidushkara Praasa
- 7). Dushkara – Saadhaarana Dushkara Praasa
- 8). Padamuni kontabhaagmicchina samasya

- 9). Viruddhaarthamu Nicchunnadi
- 10). Naluguru Naalugu Paadamaulu cheppinadi
- 11). Prasnottaramulugaa puurti cheyuta

In respect of classification Dr.Betavolu Ramabrahmam suggested the planning in his “essay kopparapu sodarakavulu puuranalu okavisleshana” The classification is as follows.

The Samasyaas are 1). Saabdika samsayalu, 2). Ardika Samasyalu

Analysing the puuranaas in ardika samasyalu he suggested various kinds of puuranaas. They are 1). Alankara Kalpana, 2). Samdharbha Kalpana 3). Bhava Kalpana, 4). Vaakya vibhajana, 5). Padaanteekarana, 6). Ekapaada tareekarana, 7). Bahupaadaatareekarana, 8). Arthaantaaee Karana or Arthantara sweekarana, 9). Anyavastu Sweekarana, 10). Padadwayeekarana, 11). Samasakarana.

While analyzing puuranaas, this analysis is very useful. While classifying both saabdika samasyalu and arthika Samsyalu appear before us. When we observe these three, the samasyaas can be classified as follows.

- 1). Samasyaas filled either with a letter, word or Samaasam
- 2). Samasyas filled with a part of samasya applying with the earlier stanza of the poem
- 3). Samsya is solved by creating a story !
- 4). Samasyalu solved by using the figures of speech
- 5). Samasyalu solved by using scientific terms
- 6). Samsyalu solved by using difficult letters of praasa
- 7). Samsyalu filled by finding out the secret of chandas
- 8). Samasyalu filled by using mockery
- 9). Samsyalu filled by changing the number of paada
- 10). Samasyalu solved by means of Arthaantaakaran samsyaa puuranam depends on the talent and scholarship of Avadhaam.
- 1). Samasyalu or riddles solved by adding a letter, word or sentence.

Samasya

రంభముకడుసారమెక్కుర రవితాసమున్న

Puurana

కరంభముకడుసారమెక్కురవితాసమున్న

Here Karmbhamu means ‘Pelapindi’. If it is mixed with curd and used, it cools the body

- 2). A part of samasya applied to the earlier stamp for solving samasya Samasya

నటబీజములంతవేసి వనితకుచంబన్

Puurana by Tirupati Venkatakavulu

కొబ్బరి భాగం డావ్గావట! బీజములంత వేసి వనిత కుచంబన్

- 3). Samasya solved by telling a creation story

Ex: Samasya

రాముడు ప్రాణమున్ విడిచెరాక్షస లోకము సంచవాంకగన్

Puurana by C.V.Subbanna

పొట్టి శ్రీరాముడు ప్రాణమున్ విడిచె రాక్షసలోకము సంచంపెగన్

- 4). Samasya solved by Figures of speech

Ex: Samasya

ధర్మజుదంజనీతనయు తాత యశోదకమేనమమయున్

Puurana by Sri M.V.S.Prasad Rao

సేర్చిన్, సెక్కె కృష్ణుడభేదికిశారికె కంసుదేమగున్

ధర్మజుదంజనీతనయు తాత యశోదకమేనమమయున్

- 5). Samasya solved by giving scientific meaning

Ex: Samasya

చిన్నది పండ్రెండేళ్ళది

యెస్సుడురతికేళి సుఖము నెరుగకమునువే

వెన్నున తామరపుత్తెను

కన్నెరికము చెడకముండె గర్భంచయ్యెన్

Puurana by an anonymous poet

6. Dushkara Praasa

Whenever Avadhaani focusses on dushkaraprasa there will be mirth in prucchaka suspence among the learned audience and eagerness in Avadhaani, Dushkara praasaas can be classified into three types. 1). Original joint letter in words 2). Joint words formed by making sandhi (Union). 3). Joint words formed by ‘Bindu’.

Ex: Samasya

దంప్రతమోదశంకరుడు తాండ్రవనుండెనురాముకైమావ్

Puurana by Kandukuri Rudrakavi

చెప్పును దంప్రములమీదశంకరుడు తాండ్రవమే మాదెను రాముకైమిన్

7. Samasyalu with metrical secrets

In 'Avadhaanam' Avadhaani and learned prucchakas have their concentration on the observation of prosody and metre whenever any error creeps in prosody, yati, praasa, ganas, they point out the error Avadhaana will fall into difficulties, if he has no knowledge of prosody and metre.

Ex : samasya

రతిజెందియుండుజర

స్థితి భూర్భువరాది లోకుడై

Puurana by kaalimolla kotajantakavulu

నిద్రారతి జెందియుండు జరరస్మితభూర్భువరాదిలోకుడై

8). Apahaasya Samasyalu

When Samasya is heard, and puurana doesn't strike, Avadhaani solves samasya mocking at prucchaka or puurana.

Let us see one samasya given during the times of Krishnadevaraya.

Ex: Samasya

Puurana by an unknown poet

గంజాయి త్రావి తురకల

సంజాతులగూడికల్లు చవి గొన్నావా

లంజలకొడక ! ఎక్కుడ

కుంజర యూధంబ దోషకుతుక జొచ్చెన్

9). Samasyaas solved by changing the stanza number Samasya in the fourth stanza itself. But the modern Avadhaanees have crossed this tradition. Instead of solving samasya in the fourth stanza, they solve it in any one of the first three stanzas. If the four stanzas are not enough, they finish the riddle in the fifth stanza.

The more talented Avadhaani is, the less he changes the stanza number.

For example:- Garikipati Narasimha Rao solved one riddle in the fourth stanza and the other sixteen riddles in other stanzas on 9.10.92, at Kakinada satavadhanam.

10). Substantiating the given meaning

It is a general tradition to solve samasya accepting the contradiction. When there is no contradiction there is no risk at all.

Ex: Samasya

భరతమాతను చెఱపట్టిభాగుపడిరి

Puurana

తల్లి పాల్గొచి రామ్యుల దన్నువారు

దేశసంవదరిప్పలకందించువారు

కడకు సంస్కృతి దోచగనివారు

భరతమాతను చెఱపట్టి బాగుపడిరి

11). Arthanteekaranam – Padaantaakaranam

In samasyaas puuranaas samasyaas that evoke interest are Arthateerana, Padaanterkarana and bhashaanteekarana. They are the best examples for the talent of prucchaka in giving such samasyaas. Observing such kind of samasyaas and solving them shows the highest Avadhaani's talent.

Ex: Samasya

దున్నకు దూడపుట్టినదిదుగ్గము పిండగదుత్తతెమ్మికన్.

Puurana

క్షేత్రమున్ దున్నకు దూడపుట్టినది దుగ్గము పిండగదుత్త తెమ్మికన్

It is an example for 'Arthanteekarana'

Ex: Samasya

సారే ! మైనహిజాతదుర్యోహపత్రేక్య - బొపు నాల్గాజితే

Puurana

సీలో కవ్వతానంద సం

సారే! మైన హి జాత దుర్యోహపత్రేక్యం బొపునాల్గాజితే

It is an example for padaatakarana

12). To give this kind of riddles and to solve them both the prucchaka and Avadhaani must have imaginative power and authority on words.

Samasyaas of rural Language

Keeping rustic language metre in mind, riddle is given. When riddle is heard its meaning doesn't strike the mind. Even if struck it appears in another meaning.

2. Dattapadi

Dattapadi means a question in the form of a poem with words given by prucchaka (Task Master) In Avadhaanam Avadhaani asks prucchaka to give him 'Dattapadi' or Prucchaka himself tells Avadhaani that he is giving Dattapadi - Prucchaka gives Avadhaani only words but not a poem. Dattapadi is a form of poem but not a group of words. What do we call the group of words given by prucchaka is a point of discussion.

‘Dattanipadaam (Amsah) sah – Dattapadam means an item with words for the filling up of the poem.

In the tradition of ‘Avadhaanam’ Dattapadi is called ‘Dattakshari’. So Dattapadi means that which is given in the form of letters. After sometime it is called ‘Vyastakshari’.

Prucchaka gives four words to avadhaani and asks him to compose a poem dictating prosody and the story he likes. Some prucchakaas leave the prosody to the will of avadhaani to change the order of words Avadhaani has to obtain permission. Generally Avadhaani follows the order given by prucchaka. If prucchaka knows the secrets of prosody it would be difficult for Avadhaani to compose a poem in a given story prucchaka likes.

It is easy for avadhaani if the given words belong to any known story and still more easy if the words are from the stories asked of The words are from the unknown story Avadhaani feels a little bit difficult.

Swaar�ham – Paraar�ham

Swaar�ham means the words given are used in the same meaning. Paraar�ham means the words given are used in some other meaning.

In Avadhaana learning Sri C.V.Subbanna has classified the words of Dattapadi in the following manner. They are

- 1). Unchaste and inauspicious words
- 2). Self sacrificing words (Swarthyaga words)
- 3). Repeated words (Paunaruktya words)
- 4). Extra-ordinary words
- 5). Foreign / non/other language words

6). Meaningless words

- 7). Minicry words
- 8). Easy words (Sukara Padaalu)
- 9). Difficult words (Dushkara Padaalu)

In the above classification ‘Self-Sacrificing’ words are not separate. The word belonging to any kind of classification can be used making it self-sacrificing word. Sri C.V.Subbanna has used the unchaste and inauspicious words making self-Sacrificing words. Different types of these words are given to Avadhaani to incorporate them in the four stanzas of a poem and complete it.

If we classify the poems composed under Dattapadi, the following divisions appear.

- 1). Poems composed in a different meaning
- 2). Poems composed under swar�ham or self sacrifice
- 3). Poems composed in a different language words

1). Poems composed in a different meaning with the words నాట, నాటకరంజ, సురటి, కట్టాటి – given, Avadhaani is asked to compose a poem in a different meaning.

2). Poems composed under self sacrifice (Swar�ham): There is nothing wrong in composing a poem with the given words of Dattapadi in their original meaning. At times prucchaka doesn’t direct Avadhaani to compose a poem under ‘Swartha Paraarthu Dattapadulu’ which are less in Avadhaanam till 1920. From 1950 onwards Dattapadi has become a must in Avadhaanam. After 1985 there is no Avadhaanam without Dattapadi.

3). Dattapada poems composed in other languages

In modern Avadhaanams Datta Padulu are given in foreign languages asking Avadhaani to compose a poem in mythological stories.

The words given in Dattapadi are English, Hindi words and Sanskrit slokas with these words Avadhanees compose Telugu poems.

Nowadays it is very difficult to fill in the stanzas with the words of Dattapadi.

3). Nisheddhaakshari, Nisheddhaakshari Vivargaakashari – Lipogram

The above three features belong to the same class of the items of Avadhaanam. Nisheddhakshari means Avadhaani tells a poem when prucchaka prohibits the letter that Avadhaani is expected to say. The poem is to be told in four stanzas in four rounds. Avadhaani must have a good retentive power to tell the poem in four stanzas conditionally.

Nisheddhaakshari means prucchaka says a few letters and asks Avadhaani not to use them.

Vivargakshari means prucchaka suggests a letter in a group of letters and asks Avadhaani to tell a poem without using the letter.

For Avadhaani Nisheddhakshari is a wrestling match whereas Vivargaakashari is an acrobatic feat.

In Telugu Avadhaanam the poems of Nisheddhaakshari are in the form of ‘Kandametre’ 90% of the poems rarely appear in ‘Tetageeti’ metre. In Sanskrit Avadhaanam the metres Arya, Anushtup appear more, Mostly kandametre, special type of Telugu poems written in a simple manner convey a large meaning.

There is a proverb that the person who writes ‘Kandam’ is a poet. It means that it is difficult to write kandam. If we see kandam, the characteristics are more for kandam than for other metres.

Though there are more norms, kandam runs spontaneously. Even in ‘Satakalu’ Kanda poems are popular. Sumati, Kumari, Krishna, Kavi Choudappa Guvvlachenna satakas are still dancing on the tongues of the public.

If we get by heart 100 poems, we can say ‘Kandam’ spontaneously. There are many gaits for kandam. We can use any characteristic or word in kandam. Even samaasaalu fit into Kandam correctly. In ancient Telugu works Shashtantyaalu are more in kandam. Avadhaani chooses kandam

for Nisheddhaarkshari as it is small. He saves time also. Prucchaka takes time to prohibit the letters in Nisheddhaakashari. There won’t be success because of time-taking. That’s why kandam is very useful for Nisheddhaakshari.

In the conduct of Nisheddhaakashari Avadhaani must have the knowledge of dictionary and also the talent of changing the word then and there. At the same time he must have the talent of following the syntax. He must know the letter that prucchaka is expected to prohibit. He must always keep in mind two or three substitute letters. He must maintain the strategy of changing into Telugu keeping prucchaka under Sanskrit delusion and again keeping him under Telugu delusion. He must keep him under delusion that the poem is completed. He must have the skill in using the words relating to description (Varnana) and in using the words that prucchaka can not imagine. If he imagines the remote word that should not exceed two or three letters. If Avadhaani uses three letter word, prucchaka prohibits the third letter. He must have the skill of applying the word to the second letter. Avadhaani should not undermine prucchaka. Some prucchakas give full freedom to Avadhaani and stop him at the appropriate time. There are the tricks in the application of Nishedham. In 1913 Nandagiri Seshagiri rao in his ‘Avadhaana Darpanam’ has given an interesting explanation of ‘Nisheddhakshari’.

Avadhaani must have the knowledge of dictionary and Sanskrit language. In addition to these, he must tell prucchaka every letter keeping in mind two alternatives.

4). Description Poetry (Varnana):

The item that gives full freedom to Avadhaani is description. It is called ‘poetry’ in ancient Avadhaanams. It is also called ‘Sadyovarnana’. Avadhaani has to fill in the item in the given metre. These two are assigned ones. For talented Avadhaani metre is no restriction. Description (Varnana) is a Parameter for Avadhaani’s talent. Anybody can do general description. The person who describes in a noble manner is a real talented poet. The talented Avadhaani is one who conducts Avadhaanam amidst intervening witty comments (Aprastuta Prasangam) or incoherent questions and counting

of ringing bells. At the end Avadhaani has to tell four stanzas for which he must have a good retentive power. For the talent of varnanas/ description Avadhaani must have direct contact with the society and a good knowledge of various subjects. Then only description (Varnanas) turns out to be splendid.

5). Nyastakshari

Nyastaakshari means the poem that contains the letters of colostrum (Stanyam). Prucchaka asks Avadhaani to tell him a poem on his desired topic. But he insists that in every stanza the letter he desired should come. He may give the metre or not. Avadhaani has to tell four stanzas in four rounds and reproduce the whole poem.

6). Vyastaakashari

Vyastaakshari means a group of letters given by making jumbling. Taking one meaningful sentence or a stanza of a poem, giving numbers in the ascending order on the letters, cutting off each letter, giving them in a bungling manner or disorderly is the tradition of vyastakshari. While Avadhaani is seriously thinking of Avadhaanam, Prucchaka gives these disorderly letters and asks him to compose a poem. There is no hard and fast rule for the number of letters. But some Avadhaanees decide maximum number and also the language. It is taking place now and then. Some Avadhaanees ask prucchakas to give them metrical poem. These are all the changes in the conduct of Vyastaakshari. They also apply this rule keeping in mind the duration of time. prucchaka need not say that he is going to give certain number of letters.

Vyastarkshari was once an independent literary entertainment techniques. It is later an incorporated in Ashtavadhaanam. Some Avadhaanees are not implementing. The reason is that there is only change of letters between Avadhaani and prucchaka. But the audience won't derive delight. Noting down the letters given by prucchaka, and observing the process of Avadhaanam carefully, the audience will derive much delight.

Conduct of Vyastaakshari for Avadhaani is one kind of retentive memory test. In Vyastaakshari it is a tradition to give not only letters but also words.

Sri Madabhushi Devulapalli brothers, Tirupati Venkata Kavulu did Vyastaakshari in different languages.

Even among sahasraavadhaanees conduct of vyastaakashari is the speciality of modern Avadhaanees.

With the names of cinemas poetical works persons, proverbs and slogans Madugula, Nagaphanisarma conducted Vyastaakshari.

If Vyastakshari is metrical and famous the moment the four, five or six letters are received, the whole poem strikes to the mind of Avadhaani and then he feels utmost delight. But some prucchakas give letters in a different way just to confuse Avadhaani. Then he resorts to his original retentive memory for composing a poem.

7. Ghantaa Gananam / Counting of bells range

The item that is counted by all in the meeting is the counting of bells rung. This can be done in two ways 1). Prucchaka rings the bell every time and asks Avadhaani to tell him the number of bells he rang.

2). Prucchaka every time, rings the bell more than once and asks Avadhaani to tell him the total number of bells he rang. We think that the second one is difficult. True to say the second one is easier. Because it is easy for Avadhaani to remember the total member of bells rang every time. In the first one Avadhaani gets disturbed while counting the bells earlier.

Gadiyaram Venkata Raja Sekhara followed the second one in his Avadhaanam on 6-9-1922. For counting the bells some Avadhaanees resort to the names of Gods like ashtottaranamaalu.

8). Counting of flowers

Avadhaanees come to the meeting wearing shirt, Pancha and upper garment. In the past they were performing Avadhaanam without shirt. The prucchakas stand behind Avadhaanees and hit them on the back with the flowers. By the touch of the flowers Avadhaanees tell the number of flowers that were hit on their back. In counting of the bells there may be variation but in respect of the flowers it is not the case. The flowers are there before their presence and it is easy to count them

In 2005 Garikipati Narasimha Rao performed Avadhaanam at 'silikandhra' in sanoci. There he conducted counting of the flowers in a different way.

In stead of hitting on the back with the flowers, Prucchakas every time give the flowers in a certain number. Once 4, or 3. Like this the flowers are given. In the end Avadhaani has to tell the total numbers of flowers presented. This is the second type of counting the bells. As regards counting the flowers Garikipati told the researcher in person

9). Chando bhashanam

Metre is one of the six sastraas, it is the fort of the four Vedas. Metre is the learning, where in the words are spoken metrically. There is metre in certain people's words. To hear them is a feast for the ears. The metre in songs and mantra, chandas is so melodious. Even in prosaic poetry there is metre in sentence and in thought. In folk songs, The dialogues continue in the form of songs. In to-day's movies the hero and heroine converse with each other dancing together by singing songs. In poetic dramas/ plays the metrical talks continue between the actors. But it is not spontaneous. In Avadhaanam Prucchaka and Avadhaani continue their conversation in poems.

Delight dawns in the meeting when this kind of conversation continues between the well- versed Avadhaani and prucchaka. If spontaneity or eloquence lacks between them, the metricas talk cannot shine. Even in rhetoric there are questions and answers in figures of speech. Sri Surapuneni Gopal Rao said about 42 kinds of questions and answers in figures of speech.

10) Kaavyokti/ Kaavya Paatam/ Kaavya vyakhaa Puraanam/ Puraanokti

The above five words suggest one thing with the change of names.

Kaavyyokti: If Prucchaka asks Avadhaani any poem from the ancient works, Avadhaani explains in detail about that work.

Kaavya Paatam: For sloka or a poem asked by Prucchaka, Avadhaani explains its meaning word by word andgives the gist of the poem just as a master explains to his student .

Kaavya Vyakhy: Whatever poem Prucchaka asks, Avadhaani replies contextually from which work the poem is taken and explains the features of that work.

Puraanam (Puranokti): It is also called Puraana Patanam. While Prucchaka recites the poems,Avadhaani explains in detail like a legendary person.

In the conduct of Kaavyokti, Prucchaka's bell metal voice is desirable. He must be in a position to read each and every sloka or a poem meaningfully.

If Prucchaka takes famous incidents from the famous poetical works, Avadhaani makes an excellent commentary on the given topic. If the incidents are un known, then Prucchaka himself has to say from which work it is taken. Then Avadhaani makes a good comment on the poem.

Prucchaka should not read in shashtantams the poem he has borrowed. Suppose he reads Avadhaani gives only its meaning. How ever Avadhaani must have good scholarship, well acquainted with the legends/ Puraanaas and have a good acquaintance with the number of works.

11). Co recital with some body (Sahapatanam)

Of the Sixty Four arts, sahapatanam / co-recital is a kind of art. It is also called sampathyom. Saha Pathanam means while prucchaka is reciting a poem from any poetical work, Avadhaani also recites in unison with the Prucchaka.

In the past generally the pundits used to get by heart Sanskrit Pancha (five) Kaavyaalu, Telugu Pancha Kaavyaalu . While Prucchaka is reciting a poem either from 'Megha sandesam or from Kumara Sambhavam' Avadhaani recites in tune with the Prucchaka it is good if the vedic Verses recited.

Sahapathanam shines when Avadhaani recites the verse in tune with the Prucchaks. Now a days this kind of Sahapathanam is lacking in Avadhaanams.

While one Mohammedan was reciting Khuraan, Sri paada Krishna Murthy recited the same Khuraan by Verbatim. This was revealed by c.v.Subbannagaru. For literature there is no caste, class or religion. This is a symbol for religious tolerance.

12) Saastraartham/ Vai yaakarana Saastraartham

This is a test for knowing Avadhaani's Scientific knowledge. Prucchaka takes Saastra and starts discussion. Avadhaani continues discussion validly and authoritatively. In one way this will be very interesting for the pundits and the knowers of Saastraas, for the others feel the experience of knowing arguments and counterarguments. The audience will gain scientific knowledge

Venkata Ramakrishna kavulu introduced Vaiyaakarana Saastram and its meaning. It is possible if Prucchaka is a good Vaikarani. In Saastraartham there are not only siksha- Vyaakaranam, chandas, Jyotishyam, Niruktam, and Kalpam but also Smrutulu, Puraanaalu, Itihaasaalu, Dharma Saastram.

In Avadhaanam so many disputes arise as regards God's existence, Rudraakshaas, Karna Kundalaalu, Paavukollu and ladies thread wearing. Even after Avadhaanam the discussion on them is continued.

13). Vyasta padi/ Vyatyasta padi/ Iehanka Slokam

It is rarely used in Avadhaanams that Prucchaka gives an item and chandas. In addition to it, he gives a four lined poem and asks Avadhaani to tell him either third or second or fourth line. This is called Vyasta padi or Vyatyastapadi. When the question is posed by Prucchaka, Avadhaani has to compose the whole poem. He must give the answer to the line or stanza asked for there may be addressing in three stanzas but in the fourth stanza there may be a salutation or a blessing.

While reciting a poem Avadhaani has to say in orderly manner, but not in disorderly manner. It is also called 'Icchanka slokam' Sri karyampudi Raja mannar conducted 'Icchaka Slokam' All his slokas are in Anushtapmetre.

14). Vruttamaalika:

It is a new item. Rallabandi Kavita Prasad introduced it. Prucchaka gives one item. But in poem Avadhaani has to say in different metre in each stanza. He has to follow 'Praasa'. He should not mix class, sub- class, and Vruttaas. By these rules in four rounds Avadhaani has to say four stanzas and recite the whole poem. Prucchaka need not say metre in advance in

four rounds Prucchaka has to say the metre in whatever round he chooses this is indeed a test for Avadhaani on other items Avadhaani composes the whole poem in his mind. But here it is not like that. Whatever round Prucchaka chooses Avadhaani has to say the poem in that stanza.

15). Slokaandhree Karanam/ Nirdishta bhaavaanuvaadam

In the past Avadhaanams translation is a part of poetry and descriptions. But now a days modern Avadhaanams translation has become an item. Raallabandi Kavita Prasad in his Ashtavadhaanam has taken it as an item. Sri MadugulaNagaphani sarma has translated from Telugu into Sanskrit and from Sanskrit in to Telugu in his Avadhaanam. In Dasagunita Ashtavaadhaanam, Sahasraavadaanam he conducted this item.

16). Aakaasa Puraanam

AakaasaPuraanam means the Puraana that was no where found in the past. This is the creation of Tirupati Venkata kavulu. Generally Puraana / pravachanam is from the famous poetica works or from Puraanaas. But Kopparapu Kavulu used to say 300,400,500 poems per hour eloquently and spontaneously from Prahlada charitra and Rukmini Kalyaanam gaathalu. But certain opponents alleged, "these kavulu are saying spontaneously the poems written earlier from these stories". Then they took a concocted story and created a puraana. Who ever writes a letter without name is called 'Aakaasa Ramanna'. But there is no person on that name like this Tirupati Venkata kavulu created 'Aakaasa Puraanam'.

Sri .C.V. Subbanna said about Aakaasa puraanam. What ever obstacles come across in the story, Avadhaani overcomes and makes a free independent travel like the plane that flies in the sky going in any direction. That's why it is named as Aakaasa Puraana.

For Puraana writings in the past five characteristies are delineated by Raja sekhera in his Kaavya Memana.

The work that speaks about Sarga, Prati sarga, dynasty Marvan taran and the history of dynasty is Puraanam. But these five characteristies are not found in 'Aakaasa Puraana'. So one should not seek these five characteristics in 'Aakaasa Puraana'.

Kasi Krishnamacharyulu, Tirupati Venkata kavulu in the past, Rallabandi Kavita Prasad at present are conducting this kind of Aakaasa puraanas in their Ashtavadhaanams.

There is no restriction for the poetic number and prosaic number in it. The stories 'Rajugari Kasi yaatra' Veerabrahmagari katha are used as stories in Aakaasa Puraans. Prucchaka gives concocted stories and asks Avadhaani to tell Puraana

Of the Tirupati Venkata kavulu one tells the story spontaneously, the other makes a commentary on it. Then the item of 'Aaakaasa Puraana' shines better.

17). Strange story (Chitra Katha)

The word 'Katha' means saying or telling.

'Kathyati it katha' Amara kosam says that there are various kinds of stories. They are 1) upari katha 2) Khanda katha 3) upakatha 4)Brihat katha

- 1) Upari katha: It means telling a story of many leaders by experts
- 2) Khanda katha: it means telling any item from Prabandhas as story
- 3) Upakatha: It means telling strangely famous story.
- 4) Brihatkaths: It means telling the story of demons and devils wonderfully.

When there are these differences Avadhaani chooses only 'chitrakatha'. The story should be completed in four stanzas humorously and strangely- Prucchaka should listen uttering the word of approval (uu) and respond contextually. He should question Avadhaani appropriately and suitably for these questions Avadhaani should answer.

These stories are not only Avadhaani's concocted stories but also famous and mixed stories. It is purely Prosaic. This is the example for Avadhaani's talent of starting, continuing and completing the story. It should be observed, that the story plan may not be prepared earlier. Avadhaani has to say story to the great appreciation of the audience with his continuing dialogues and characters created in the middle.

Kasi Krishnamacharyulu story Avadhaana yaatra reflects the then existing society. The continuation of the story with the characters Munshi, picchakka, Verraiah runs smoothly.

18). Nishiddhagamana Kathanam

Nishiddha gamana kathanam is a modern evolutionary change of chitrakatha. Raallabandi kavita Prasad introduced it in Ashtaavadhaanam

In chitra katha there is a possibility of questioning Avadhaani by listening to his story. But in 'Nishiddhagamana Kathanam' Prucchaka stops the

continuation of Avadhaani's story from time to time just as 'Akshara nishidhani is implemented in Nishiddhakshari. Prucchaka stops the continuation of the events in the story.

19). Kaavyaanu Karana (Parody)

The equivalent word for parody is Kaavyaanu karana. The famous poets have their own style of writing. Avadhaani has to dub their famous poems. Prosaic poetry and songs spontaneously following their style. When we say parody, we think of Jalasutram Rukminatha Sastri, sri Ramanna Machiraju Devi Prasad, Jonnavittula Ramalingeswara Rao, veldandi Nityaanenda Rao. They have brought parodies into lime light in Telugu. Inspired by these poets Raallabandi kavita Prasad conducted 'Ashtadasaavadhaanam' taking parody as an item

20). Prosaic poetry (Vachana Kavita)

Avadhaanam is restricted to poems. It is traditional literary genre. It is the relic such belonging to middle ages and the age of Zamindars. Some have raised reproach that it is the example proof for feudal culture. But it is a lie. Avadhaanam is a genre. It is immediate poetic creation. How many differences are there in poetry? The same differences can be created in Avadhaanam Prucchakas may pose questions on any topic. It may be traditional, progressive or revolutionary. Avadhaani tells poetry as per his maturity and commitment. There may be traditionalists among Avadhaanaas but not in Avadhaanam.

In poetry there are revolutionary poets who shine very well by telling the revolutionary ideology. There are traditional poets who express traditional ideology there are differences amongst poets. But there is no difference in Avadhaana genre. Taking 'national Integrity' as story Sri Medasani Mohan performed 'Satavadhanam' at Rabindra Bharati. In the questions on 'National Integrity' continued. During the passage of time prosaic poetry came in to existence as a part of Avadhaanam. Avadhaani can conduct it in two ways.

- 1) Telling prosaic poetry spontaneously on a given topic.
- 2) Prucchaka writes half prosaic poetry and asks Avadhaani to fill it The first one descriptive one, the second one is samasya(riddle).

Avadhaani must know the techniques of composing prosaic poetry. Mere framing sentence is not enough. It is not prosaic poetry. From Tilak to yandhuri Sudharcar's poesies are told spontaneously. Avadhaani must

have acquaintance with the feminism, Dalit poetry, Minority poetry post modern poetic trends, Mini poetry, hykus, Naanees in addition to the progressive, rude, revolutionary poetic trends. What kind of poetry Prucchaka asks, Avadhaani must be in a position to understand that poetry. What styles are there in poetry, Avadhaani must know them even in prosaic poetry. If necessary he must tell mini poesy. He must know the characteristics of mini Kavitaas of Dr. Ravi Rama Rao and Addepalli Rama Mohan Rao.

21) Song/ Paata/ Geyam/ Jaavali/ Keertan/ Sangeetam/ Vruttapadi

If Avadaani is endowed with melodious voice and the knowledge of music, the meeting will be a grand success. In the past Sri Adibhatla Narayana dasu, Sri Madabhushi Venkata charyulu and at present Sri Madugula Nagaphani Sarma with their melodious voice and with the knowledge of music took up these items. Sri Kasi Krishnamacharyulu took up keertans and Javali in his 'Avadhanam' Avadhaani who is well – versed in music takes up classical music, whereas Avadhaanees who have melodious voice take up song or balad,etc.

Sri Madabhushi in his Satavadhanam at Agiri palli took up keertana, Sri karampudi Rajamannar in his Avadhaanam at Bhatti prolu in 1896 took up Javali and told it spontaneously. Sri Madugula Nagaphani Sarma in his maha sahasraavadhaanam took up a song and sang it spontaneously.

The great musical maestro Sri. M. Chittaranjan in his Avadhaanam did Sadyah Puurana in Mohana Ragam. Sri Bala Murali Krishna came as Prucchaka and gave an item. Avadhaani sang a song in response to Prucchaka. Bala Murali Krishna, Sri Naga phani Sarma sang 70 songs spontaneously in 'Sahasraavadhaanam and in dvisahasraavadhaanam 139 songs. He took up Nruttpadi in ' Dvisahasraavadhaanam.

The great dancers like Smt. Alekhy, Smt Managalabhat, Sri Raghava Raju Bhat, Smt Rajeswari Sainath, Kumari, Sweta kumari, Swati somanath, Geeta Madhuri are dancing on the stage. Avadhaani then and there sings spontaneously a song in tune with their dance. In the movie 'chelleli Kapuram' the song 'Aadave Mayuri was sung in tune with the dance. This may be an inspiration for Avadhaani to introduce this item in Avadhaanam.

22). Discourse of other language (Anyabhasho panyasam) Sri Madajjada Adibhatla Narayana das performed 'Anyabhaashopanyaasam' in his

Avadhaana exhibiting his knowledge of English. Knowing that Narayana das was a traditionalist, Prucchakas were giving deliberately this item. Like this Nyastaksharaas, Vyastaaksharaas, English words occupied a place in Avadhaanam.

23). Incoherent speech/ Intervening witty speech/ Aprastuta Prasangam

It is the high light of modern Avadhaanam It has taken a place even in satadvisahasraavadhaanams to-day. The main intention of this item is to disturb and divert the concentration of Avadhaani. It is also called 'Apsartuta prasangam, laukika Prasangam or chamatkaara bhaashanam

There is a figure of speech entitled 'Aprastuta Prasamsa' in rhetoric. the present day matter told indirectly is called 'Aprastuta Prasam saalankaarini. Sri c.v. Subbanna compared Aprastuta Prasangi with a jester.

The jester produces laughter by posing a question to Avadhaani disturbing his concentration when he is seriously thinking of the response to be given to prucchaka in the same humorous vein and tone.

When ever the jester wants to question, he may question. He may question any number of times. But he should not question when the other Prucchakaas are asking. He should not question at the time of Avadhaani's 'Dhaarana'. While questioning he should not use unparliamentary language and should not use the words humiliating women. The jesters show their talent on a par with Avadhaani.

24). Monogamous power (Yakasanthaagranam)

It is an ancient wonderful retentive power. Once we hear a poem sloka,prose or group of words and it is repeated then and there is called Monogamous power or yekasanthaagranam. It means that what we hear is repeated as it is then and there. It is an illustration for mind power. There are a few ways in retaining the metrical composition. In the same way there are a few ways in retaining non- metrical prosaic words. Sri Madabhushi Venkatacharyulu introduced monogamous power/ yekasanthaagranam in Avadhaanam. In Agiripalli Satavadhaanam Sri Madabhushi did by composing a seesa padyam in dvisanthanugrahanam. It is repeated backwards too. It is indeed great.

"Saying in backwards is like catching the tail of cobra and standing it erect" stated C.V.Subbanna. But it is not clear whether the word or every letter is in verse.

Some Avadhaanees try to say the verse in reverse order. Sri. Madabhushi Practised it well. Whether it is a letter inverse or word inverse reflects the talent of Avadhaanis. The techniques Avadhaani follows are “Abnormal Association techniques. But they are not applicable to the poems grasping the poems or slokas may be as follows. There are a few characteristics in Monogamous power/ yekasanthanugrahanam.

A). Way of reading – Characteristics

- 1) Avadhaani must be skilful. His way of reading should be as follows.
He must observe the metre of sloka or poem and read it accordingly
- 2) The meaning should be clear
- 3) For the sake of meaning, he should not read it by disjointing the words if it is done, the gait of the poem is disturbed
- 4) He must read it clearly pronouncing the short and long notes.
- 5) Figures of speech should be sounded clearly
- 6) He must read it the letters of yati and prasa clearly.
- 7) The whole poem should be read at a goodpace
- 8) Reading without seeing the text is better than reading the text by seeing
- 9) It is desirable to read by seeing and grasping at a time. It is yekasanthaagraghi

B) Way of grasping at a time

- 1) He must sit right in a good posture with a sound mind in a sound body
- 2) Listen attentively closing the eyes
- 3) At first recognize tha metre of the poem
- 4) Listen attentively the first letter of every stanza, its yati and remember the four stanzas while reading
- 5) Observe the meaning along with the poem. The meaning should be planted on the surface of his heart
- 6) If he comes across a special word, he must remember it and its earlier word.
- 7) When he comes across a compound word, he must recognize it and keep it in his mind.
- 8) The figures of speech used should be kept in mind

9) Consider the first and second stanza as one part and the third and fourth stanza as another part-think that there are two parts.

10) While listening to the poem he must think that he is reading by seeing some text and also think that the letters in that book are his hand-written letters.

11) After listening to the poem he must plant the whole poem on the surface of his heart for just 20 seconds.

12) While rendering the whole poem he must tell it slowly.

By this practice he may attain yekasanthanugrahanam. Even the poems can be divided as peruekasanthaanugrahanam.

1. Meaningful poems
2. Soundful poems
3. Poems of poetic trends.

25). eonfiguration of letter/ Akshara vinyaasam

It is a strange item. Even the spectators or audience can participate in it. A poem is written on the black board on the stage of Avadhaanam. Writing the poem on a piece of paper can be handed over to the audience. The poem may be with a prucchaka.

26). Yantrika Ganitam (Magic square)

In Avadhaanam Magic square is an important retentive memory item. Yantram means number machine. While tying talisman for the people in villages, the essential parts of a spell or charm are written on copper/ gold/ silver sheets. In certain traditions people write the number instead of letters. They are called number machines. The speciality of these machines is that in whatever square way we count, the total numbers is the same. The squares of that type are called ‘yantrika ganitam’ or magic square. The three horizontal lines x three vertical lines start and end up to 16 horizontal and 16 vertical lines.

The power of yantram/machine depends on the number of lines counted together. It also depends on the number of cross words. There are all squares. They are not rectangles.

In Siddanagarjuna tantram there are many matters about these yantras or machines. In the past Rajasekhara Venkata sesha kavulu, kasi krishnacharyulu conducted this kind of yantrika ganitam or magic square. In 1950 sri Puliparti sarabhacharyulu conducted yantrika ganitam in his

Avadhaanam. In modern times Raallabandi Kavita Prasad and others are conducting it.

27). Mathematics of the week (Vaaraganitam)

When Prucchaka (Task master) asks Avadhaani the date of English year Avadhani replies there and then. This is called Vaaraganitam and Panchangagananam. About – Vaaraganitam Sri. C.V Subbanna garu gave a detailed account. From 3001 B.C to 2100 A.D the years in between are divided into parts from 1 to 7.

28). Manoganitam/ Ganitaavadhaanam

By the method of Manoganitam so many kinds of Mathematical problems can be solved. For perfect square, square root, for perfect cube, cube root, to the root of five Panchana moolam kattadam are built. In the same way on the black boards the multiplication of four lettered number with another four lettered number can be solved either at a time or by degrees baring on the place of the numbers. Sri Lakkaji sanjeevaraya sarma has turned it into ganitaavadhaanam and became famous. Certain Avadhaanees conduct one or two items of ganitaavadhaanam in their literary Avadhaanams.

But Avadhaani must be good at multiplication tables, additions, Practice should be done for two days. Smt. Sakuntala devi and Sanjeevaraya sarma performed it speedily like computers. Raallabandi Kavita Prasad conducted ‘Manoganitam in Ashtavadhanam.

Though this item is not related to literature. Avadhaani tells the multiplication product of the two big lettered numbers to the great surprise of the audience.

In Manoganitam basing on the talent of Avadhaani he can perform many kinds of items. The number multiplication may give a kind of novelty for the audience. As a result leisure for Avadhaani will be available. By leisure Avadhaani’s concentration may stand good.

29). Playing cards/chess/Horsetrak/carroms

The above items depend on the self interest of Avadhaani playing cards is also called pekata, Ironically it is called chaturmukha paaraayanam. In it there are so many kinds. The game is chosen as per the will of Prucchaka. Sri Kandukuri Veeresalingam pantulu introduced this game in Avadhaanam. In it there is no necessity of succeeding the game by

Avadhaani. Whether Avadhaani or Prucchaka are playing the cards in accordance with the rules of the game is important.

In the same way in chess Prucchaka and the others see that whether Avadhaani is moving the Pawns in accordance with the rules of the game or not. If one game is over, the second game continues like Aprastuta prasangam, (intervening witty speech) The players cards or chess may ask Avadhaani to play with them at any time.

Aswaputi (Horsetrek) means the way of moving the horse pawn in chess by Avadhaani. Kasi Krishna charyulu alone was playing this game. This is also called Turangodgamanans

Some others perform playing caroms in Avadhaanam whether it is chess playing cards, Horsetrek caroms. It is confined to Avadhaani and prucchaks the audience won’t evince any interest in it. That’s why they have disappeared from the show of Avadhaanam. In their place the most interesting items take a place in Avadhaanam.

30). Likhitaakshari

It is known that Sri pada Krishna murthy conducted likhitaakshari. He quoted in Avadhaana vidya. accepting Likhitaakshari and Sahapathanam (co.recital) he adorned it in Avadhaanam. It is of Subbanna’s opinion that they are perhaps, Anyadesas for the reading lekhanas from ‘Pedda Balasiksha. Lekhanam and Likhitaakshari may not be one. Lekhanam means writing. Likhitaakshari means the word with the letters written. They are written by Prucchaka In vyastaakshari. Prucchaka writes the letters and gives them to Avadhaani Avadhaani sets right in the correct order the disordered letters and at last recites them. In it ‘Dharana’ (retentive power) is more important than Avadhaani’s creation. Like in dattaakshari, dattapadi, Vivashaakshari Nyastaakshari Avadhaani is expected to write a poem. In that poem the letters given by prucchaka should be there. Then it becomes nyastaakshari. But here in difference. In Nyastaakshari and dattaakshari the other letters may be there in addition to the letters given by prucchaka. But in Likhitaakshari Avadhaani has to compose a poem or a sloka using the letters given by prucchaka only. There may be yekaakshari dvakshari, tryakshari, chaturaakshari we come across many poems composed by Avadhaanis in this way. Prucchakas writes on a piece of paper a group of

letters. The Composition of the poem takes place with those letters. That is likhitarkshari.

31. **Antyaakshari :**

The modern student groups are playing Antyaakshari with the songs in telugu cine movies. In the past these were called 'Tokapadyaalu'. It is a game played by the villagers who have good acquaintance with the poetic literature who are endowed with literary flavor. The players whether children or adults are divided into two groups and play the game. If one group reads a poem, the other group taking the last letter or gunitam reads another poem. The game continues like this. Who ever fails to read, the opponents are decided as victors. This competition is called 'Tokapadyalu poti'. If the game starts at night, it ends in the morning. In those days the poems of various kinds were dancing on the tip of their tongues. In place of poems the cine songs are taking place is a wonder.

For the spread of education in poetry 'Antyaakshari is again inserted in Avadhaanam Satavadhaani Sri G.M.Rama sarma is conducting this item in Avadhaanams. Conducting Antyaakshari is easy. It is useful for the spread of education in poetry.

32. **Naama Sameekaranam / Raaga Sameekaranam:**

Sataavadhaanulu Sri Gandluri Dattatreya sarma, Sri G.M.Rama sarma are conducting it. It is equivalent to Ghantaa gananam. Or Pushpa gananam. Avadhaani is expected to count the number of bells or flowers. But in Naama sameekaranam prucchaka gives now and then a few names. At the end of Avadhaanam, Avadhaani is expected to say those names meaning fully. Prucchaka may give names of any subject. For remembering all these name Avadhaani must have keen concentration and also abnormal association techniques with those Avadhaani fabricates a wonderful story.

Sri Devulapalli subbaraya sastri is different from the above Avadhaanees. During the conduct of Avadhaanam if prucchaka sings songs in some 'Raag'. Avadhaani is expected to remember and say all the 'Raagas' at the end. But Avadhaani must have the knowledge of music. This is Raaga Sameekaranam. The audience enjoy this item a lot.

33. **Aasuvu or Extempore poetry :**

There are four kinds of poetic genres in poetry. They are 1). Aasu or Extempore poetry, 2). Madhura, 3). Chitra, 4). Vistara. If the four Aasuvu or Extempora poetry is the first one.

For Avadhaani Aasukavitam / extempore poetry is his worshipping deity. The more Avadhaani is endowed with the power of extempora poetry, the more he gains name and fame. If this power is less, his Avadhaanam stumbles and it looks like a heavy cart drawn by the weak bullocks on the highway.

As regards the extempore poetry Tirupati Venkata Kavulu said, 'It is like a catwalk on Nelleru. The cat runs speedily. In the same way the extempore poetry runs speedily in the case of Tirupati Venkata Kavulu. They have used this idiom in their poetry.

For extempore poetry Kopparapu Kavulu became famous. Aashkavitha means Kopparapu Kavulu introduced 'Aasuvu' as an item in Avadhaanam. Prior to them, there was no 'Aasuvu'. Now the other Avadhaanees are following it.

Aasu Kavitam means the poetry that spread. In poem the concept/ thought spreads. The life of Aasuvu is the skill by which the concept or thought is introduced into the body of the poem. The extempore poet must have these characteristics.

1. The composition of the poem takes place speedily the moment prucchaka asks. Avadhaani starts the poem.
2. What Avadhaani thinks he composes a poem without sacrificing his concept.
3. He overcomes yati, gana, and prasa in prosody.
4. The waste words are less
5. Avadhaani uses idioms, proverbs, sayings in his poems.
6. He uses the figures of speech to adorn his poems.
7. He runs the poem without disturbing its natural gait.

For obtaining or acquiring the power of extempore poetry Avadhaani must practice it incessantly. He must bend the habit of composing poems in his mind. He must get by heart the poems written by others. In extempore poetry the quickness and speed of composing poems will be taken into consideration. poetry in Avadhaanams is only ancillary but not important. That's why extempore poetry is denounced as hellish poetry (Kshudra Poetry). In Avadhaanam the poems welled up from the heart of Avadhaani are rare. Kopparu Kavulu were telling spontaneously more than 500 poems per hour. But they did not stand long. In Avadhaanam only a few artistic poems that stand long are now available.

34. Uddhishtakshari / Chitrakshari

The Avadhaanees who are endowed with creativity and retentiveness can conduct this item. Devulapalli Subbaraya sastri in 1896 on 19th February night from 9 to 11 p.m. conducted it at Mylapur. He is one of the brothers of Devulapalli.

It is mentioned in the introduction of ‘Mahendra Vijayam’ by Sri Seshadri Ramana Kavulu that Sri Gurazada Apparao acted as prucchaka. In Anushtup chandas (Metre) the details of that item are as follows.

- 1). The item should be in praise of God or Goddess
- 2). Prucchaka drew the chess having 32 houses in rectangular shape.
- 3). In horizontal lines there are 8 houses.
- 4). In Vertical lines there are four houses.
- 5). Avadhaani is expected to fill in 32 houses in Anushtup chandmetre.
- 6). He should not say at a time.
- 7). When Prucchaka asks, then only Avadhaani has to fill in the house with a letter that prucchaka wanted.
- 8). After Avadhaanam Avadhaani has to reproduce the entire letters in the chess. Prucchaka may ask in any order.

The speciality of Sri Devulapalli Subbaraya Sastri is that he conducted two ‘Uddhishtaksharis’ at Mylapur. In one uddhishtakshari Gurazada Apparao acted as prucchaka and asked Avadhaani to eulogise Anjaneya Swamy.

35. Nirdishtakshari:

Nirdishtakshari is often mistaken as Nyastakshari by certain modern people. But it is quite different from Nyastakshari and more dangerous /

critical than uddhishtakshara. But they are almost one and the same. What characteristics uddhistakshari has, Nirdishtaksheri has also the same characteristics as uddhishtakashari. Nirdishtakshari is also in praise of God or Goddess. It has a chessboard having 3 houses. But there is only one difference Prucchaka fills certain even houses with the letters and asks Avadhaani to fill in the other houses. Prucchaka fills the houses with consonants. But Avadhaani has full freedom to change according to his convenience.

Devulapalli Subbaraya Sastri conducted two Nirdishtaksharis at Mylapore. Prucchaka gave the consonants in odd numbers of the chessboard. How Avadhaani filled up is given here.

Sahityaamsalulu : Feature of literature

Related to retentiveness

1. Poetry (Description), 2. Nisheddhaakshari, 3. Nishiddhaakshari, 4. Likhitaakshari, 5. Nyastaakshari, 6. Yekasanthaagrrashanam, 7. Slokaandhraakaranam, 8. Samasya (Problem) (Yekapada), Dvipada, Tripada), 9. Nallentlu, 10. Dattapadi, 11. Vyastyastapadi, 12. Icchanka gananam, 13. Vyastakshari 14. Vrutha melika, 15. Uddishtaakshari (Chitrak shari), 16. Nirdishtakshari

Unrelated to Retentiveness:-

- 1). Voyyakarana Sastrartham 2). Purana pathaam / Kavya pathanam / Kaavyokti / Kaavyavyakhy / Kavya Paatam / Aprastuta prasangam
- 3). Aprastuta prasangam / Aprastuta prasamsa / Loukika prasangam
- 4). Chitrakatha, 5). Chandobhashanam . 6). Sahapathanam, 7). Aakaasa puranam, 8). Anyabhaashopanyaasam, 9). Keertana, 10). Jaavali 11). Song, 12). Ballad 13). Nruttapadi, 14). Parody, 15). Aashuvu, 16). Vachana kavulu, 17). Minikavaitha, 18). Nishiddhagamaa kathanam, 19). Akshara vinyaasam, 20). Ascending/ descending writing, 21). Antyaakshari

Items unrelated to Literature: Related to retentiveness

1. Ghantagananam 2. Pushpa gananam (Pramuka - Sankhya Khyanam)
3. Naamasamekaranam, 4. Raagasameekaranam, 5. Yantrika Ganitham
6. Manoganitam, 7. Anavalkita saarikaabhilakhanam, 8. Carroms. Items unrelated to retentiveness (1). Music, 2). Chess, 3). Aswaplutham, (4). Varagananam, (5). Playing cards, (6). Manoganitham, (7). Anavalokitha Sarikabhekanam, (8). Carroms.

Nyastakshari:-

In any poem, in any stanza, at any number of the letter if the metre is not disturbed and if one, two or three letters or words are incorporated accordingly and if the description matter is fulfilled as desired by prucchaka (The task-master) in the stanzas it is called Nyastakshari.

CHAPTER - IV

Avadhaanamu - Item of Poetry

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The word 'Kavi' and its sound is as old as vedam. There are references about it in yajurvedam, Isavaasyopanishat, Nirukta nighantuvu and Amarakosam. 'Kavi describes anything by his skill', says Amarakosam.

Kavi must have both talent and creativity and many powers such as scholarship study and worldly knowledge. In addition to these the live nerves for kavi are his intellect etymology and practices. When he has the three characteristics, he will shine in the field of poetry.

Of the item of Avadhaanam, poetry is one. Afterwards emerged samasya, Dattapadi, Varnana, Nishadhaakshara, Vyastaakshari Ashuvulu.

There are certain allegations on the poetry of Avadhaanam. They are
1). Waste words are more in the poetry of Avadhaanam
2). There are more difficult complex and compound words.
3). There will be farsighted application
4). The concepts of old poets take the new form of words in lucid descriptions.
5). There will be less new simile
6). The concentration of Avadhaani is more on completion of the poem, composition of the poem than in the presentation of the poem artistically.
7). Essence, Sound, irony and satire are less.

Facing the allegations certain Avadhanees have succeeded in composing good poetry in Avadhanam without disturbing dhara and dharana such kind of Avadhanees are the first-class Avadhanees. However great Avadhanis is, he has to say certain sapless poem. If we collect all the poems said by Avadhani in his Avadhanam, count how many poems are safful and how many poems are sapless we can get the disappointed results.

Avadhaanam Padyasilpam :

While telling a poem in Avadhaanam, he has no time to concentrate on the artistic composition. But by practice he many achieve on kind of art out of sabda Artha, Bheera Suukti Samvaada manostvatva chitram Naatya, drusya chandovakya. Exhibiting the above things one the screen of his mind the poet Avadhaanis creates good poetry. While composing poems

in Avadhanam, Avadhani has to observe the following sculptures. They are 1). Sound Sculpture, 2). Meaningful sculputre, 3). Concept or thought sculpture, 4). Sermon sculpture, 5). Dialogue sculpture, 6). Dance Sculpture, 7). Visual Sculpture, 8). Shape Sculpture, 9). Metre Sculpture, 10). Word Sculpture. It is like another Avadhaanam performed on the stage of his heart. This kind of Avadhaanam should be performed on the surface of his heart. Then only Avadhaanam would be wonderful.

In taking the item of poetry in poems of Avadhaanam and in taking the following parameters a good observation has been made. The parameters are 1). Apurva varnana naipunyam (Uncommon or unique descriptive skill) 2). Sweeya kavitvamudra (Self poetic impression) 3). Bhaavukata (Imaginative genius) 4). Alankara Prayoga Naipunyam (Skill of usage of Figures of speech) 5). Chamatkaaram – chaatusphuusti (trick-ready wit).

1. Apurva Varnanaa Naipunyam 18.7.23 "Varnanaa Nipunah Kavih" is the saying of the elders. The Pre-modern poets did a large number of descriptions both in Telugu and sanskrit. The Avadhaani poets have had a good acquaintance with most of their poems. The same descriptions reflect in their Avadhaana poems. But the angle of Avadhaani's talent won't appear.

2. Sweeya Kavitvamudra: (Self batic impression)

Either in sanskrit or in Telugu while telling a poem in the name of Individuals, it is a tradition to us a similar. There will be change of words but not the thought. While describing the beauty Avadhani uses old similar then there will be no element of poetry in his poems. Extra-ordinary description, extra-ordinary similar appear in the poems of Avadhanam. If we collect all the poems then we can understand how the element of poetry in Avadhanam would be strange.

Every efficient Avadhaani has his own poetic stamp. That stamp appears either in the form of difficult complex and compound words, or in the form of idioms or sayings or in the form of maquiloquance. When the poem is heard, we can say that it is the poem of so and so. Tirupati Venkata Kavulu, kopparapu kavulu are the best examples.

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If we observe meticulously the poems of Avadhani and the poems of other poets. We can find a subtle difference. In the poems of Avadhani there will be perfect dhara and perfect story-telling. This is reiterated in the preface of the ‘work’ Avadhanees Manjari by sashadri ramans.

3. Bhaavukata / Imagination

The best idea or thought is reflected in the poetry of Avadhaanees when they are moved with mercy or hearing the mercy related incidents. This kind of motif thought is not only in modern poetry but was also there in ancient poetry. The motif may be either love or deluge. Many Avadhaanees composed so many poems replete with the best ideas in good prosody effortlessly even in non-refined thoughts.

4. Skill of usage of Figures of Speech

There are Avadhanees who created poetry in their own style replete with the figures of speech, comparing the abstract things with the concrete ones and the concrete things with the abstract ones. Poems came into Avadhaanam creating / modern poetry. As was said by Sri Sri ‘Kaadade Kavita Kanarham. “Many Avadhanam poets used even the trivial” things in Avadhaanam

Dandakamu

It is a kind of metre (prosody) forming with unlimited prose. This is generally used in praise of god or goddess or our favourite object from 1975 to 1985. Perala Bharata sarma did many Avadhaanams using this kind of Dandakama.

CHAPTER - V

AVADHANAMU - CONTROVERSIES

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Poets are tyrants. More so are the Avadhanees. When the poetry is exhibited on a platform many arguments and counter arguments crop up. When two scented vendors fight with each other and when their scented bottles are broken the people around enjoy the fragrance. Similarly when Avadhanees indulge in arguments and counter arguments the learned people around enjoy the poetic tricks of fragrance.

The word 'Argument' (Vivadamu) has many meanings like 'Untrue', 'Quarrel' (Kalahamu) Blame (Ninda) and 'Word' (Maata) etc.

In these Kalahamu or quarrel or argument is used as the best.

The Avadhana process shows the literary ferocity. In this the joy is mingled with glitter. When one strives to win, then there will be quarrel or arguments. Very many interesting episodes are seen when the poets indulge in arguments and counter argument. Dhurjati is one of the poets in the Kingdom of Srikrishna Deva Raya, he wrote a literary classic, "Kalahastheswara Mahatyam". In this a Tamil poet, Satkeerudu indulges in the argument with Sankara, the lord. That means satkeerudu argues with Dhurjati in his classic book of 'Kalahastheswara Mahatyam'. Another great poet, Srinadhudu and another one Dindima Bhattu are involved in many arguments / counter arguments, the quarrels of which became very famous in Telugu Literature.

The poets of Lord Siva and the poets of Lord Vishnu ignited the religious fire between themselves and they became bitter enemies.

There were many arguments between Telugu poets and Sanskrit poets. In the world of literature there were many arguments based on language, religion, caste and the processes and poetic principles.

In the history of Avadhanam, the centre of arguments and counter arguments are the "Tirupati Venkata Kavulu. "They are known as "Twin Poets". These poets argue with all other poets very often. Not only that, they argue within themselves and in many cases their arguments are also

solved pleasantly. Their arguments and counter arguments did a lot of good to the Literary world because they excelled in poetic feats. The twin poets are (1). Thirupathi Sastry (2). Venkata Sastry. Their friendship itself started with arguments.

In this twin poets, Thirupathi Sastry is famous in creating arguments. Venkata Sastry is good in conducting the arguments.

Thirupathi Venkata poets – Arguments with other Poets :-

Thirupathi Venkata poets have a number of arguments and Counter arguments with other poets like Sripada Krishnamurthi Sastry, Adibhatla Narayana Dasu, Venkata Ramakrishna poets kopparapu brothers, etc. Still others like "Bala Saraswathi". Srinivasacharyulu, Nrusimha charyulu of Gadwel dynasty, Sri Karyampudi Rajamannar etc. Sri Pisupati Chidambara Sastry had arguments with Adipudi Prabhakara Rao in their Avadhana shows.

Kopparapu poets – Their arguments with Thirupati Venkata Kavulu.

In the process of Avadhana History, the arguments between these two twin poets have become very famous and reached highest peak. In the twin poets of kopparapu brothers, the elder poet is kopparapu Venkata Subba Raya and the other is Kopparapu Venkata Ramana.

These two twin poets had arguments even in the arrangement of chairs on the dias.

Venkata Ramakrishna poets Thirupathi Venkata poets had their arguments and counter arguments in Avadhanams.

Venkata Ramakrishna poets are the Residential poets of Pitapuram Maharaja. In these twins the first one is voleti to Venkata Rama Sastry (1883- Voleti)

1939) and the second one is Vedula Ramakrishna Sastry – (1889- 1918)

Kakaraparthi – His arguments

The veteran of pundits is Kakaraparthi Venkata Rama Sastry. Thirupathi Venkata poets had arguments and counter arguments with Kakaraparthi Venkata Sastry. They had funny and ferocious arguments on the dias and the audience provoked Thirupathi Venkata poets and enjoyed the proceedings.

Thirupathi Venkata poets had arguments with Bellamkonda Rama Rao also in the Avadhanam. Kasi Krishna charyulu in his Avadhana in Hyderabad had arguments with Sriman Appalacharyulu.

Avadhanam of Adibhatla Narayana Das:-

Adibhatla Narayana Das earned fame in his “Asadhyaashtavadhanam”. The fame he got was also subjected to criticism. Some people who were jealous of Adibhatla provoked a journal writer Sri Purushothama Sastry to write criticism on Adibhatla.

Modern Avadhanalu - Arguments / Counter arguments:-

The arguments / counter arguments were very explosive before early part of 20th century. After 1985 such arguments / counter arguments are not seen. After 1985 Avadhanam took place giving importance to entertainment rather than arguments. In these Avadhanas if the Avadhani is unable to recite poems extempore, and if the extempore recital is reduced, if there is a mistake in the experimentation of sound, and the compound-words against the grammar rules and if there is default in the metrescale (Chandassu) and if there is no memory power, there is no system to criticize or argue on the face itself. Avadhanam was performed in the print media also, Time has changed.

They say that time is now changed. Task Masters need not have previous eminent characters. Task Masters also were felicitated along with Avadhani. Again these task masters are divided into ordinary and extraordinary task masters and were felicitated.

In the place of the president of the meeting who is also a judge of the proceedings, the supporters have occupied. The questions of the task

masters are taken even before the meeting. Answers are given only to some type of questions. In the place of poem of metre (chandassu) songs are included, involvement of political people, and their blessings, business trends and aspiring for power have become enormous. Avadhani takes rest in the middle of the performance. Sri Garikapati Narasimha Rao has written 10 poems in his book “Kavitha Khandika Sathavadhanam” criticizing the pollution taking place in modern Avadhanalu.

CHAPTER - VI **PARYAVALOKANAM (AN OVERVIEW0)**

There are good qualities, limitations, and useful opportunities and many challenges in the process of Avadhanam that stood against time. Therefore it should proceed forward increasing the good qualities, getting over the limitations, expanding the opportunities, and facing the challenges etc. It should hoist the powerful flags of the Telugu people for future generations.

With the inclusion of Science and entertainment, with an exhibitory art in the field of Literature, With the drain of mental power of a person, Avadhana Vidya is a mile stone in the memory power of different forms and shapes. There is every possibility of proceeding to the 21st century with new trends.

Avadhana Vidya – SWOT Analysis:-

The art of Avadhana SWOT Analysis, any education in order to shine in future should be analysed on FOUR items. They are (1) Good qualities , (2). Limitations (3). Usage (4). Challenges or threats. This is called ‘SWOT’ Analysis.

The SWOT analysis is done using the Internet. The word SWOT includes S=Strength, W=Weakness, O=Opportunities , T=Threats.

So one can analyse the Avadhana education (Avadhana Vidya) using these four items.

Avadhana education – Good Qualities or Strength:-

- 1). Avadhanamu attracts people.
- 2). People respect Avadhanam and the Avadhanees.
- 3). Avadhanam has hundreds of years of History.
- 4). Avadhana Vidya can be extended to the other fields.
- 5). Money is not the criterion for the conduct of Avadhana Vidya. It can be done with any amount of money.
- 6). For conducting Avadhanam the physical facilities are not needed much.
- 7). For some types of Avadhanalu the conducting time is very less
- 8). There is facility for experimenting with new items or ideas
- 9). The contemporary items can be exhibited artistically with stage inspiration.

- 10). There are no differences between caste, religion, group, sex Language and age in Avadhanam.
- 11). Avadhana Vidya can be attained through practice
- 12). Many literary books emerged through Avadhana Vidya in Telugu
- 13). Research is going on the Mental power and memory power

II. Limitations (or Weaknesses)

1. The person who performs Avadhanam alone receives the respect and honour
2. If the person who performs Avadhanam is inefficient, people look down upon Avadhanam.
3. In the verses composed in Avadhanam related to Literature some part may be uninteresting and unenthusiastic.
4. In the conduct of Avadhanam if man related powers and Physical and environmental related powers cause any hurdles, the Avadhanam gets affected.
5. The success or failure of the Avadhanam depends on the capacity of the task Masters and the items that they give.
6. The time taken for conducting satha and sahasra avadhanalu (Avadhanam with hundred items and one thousand items will be very long and therefore there will be stress and strain for the organizers.

III. Opportunities (Usage):-

1. Avadhanam can be used in any field of knowledge.
2. Every field of literature can be adopted to avadhanam
3. Avadhanam should inculcate in youth enthusiasm on the retentiveness inspire the youth on the power of Memory or Remembrance.
4. Along with poets and pundits more number of common people and lovers of Literature can participate in the performance, as avadhanam provides such a type of interest and inspiration.
5. Avadhanam is a type of game which provides entertainment as well as knowledge.
6. If the Avadhani is efficient, he can earn not only money but also fame.
7. Many historical items can be known when poems in the Avadhanam are recited. Avadhanam can stand as a mirror of the contemporary public.
8. Avadhanam can be taken as a life item.

9. The Avadhanalu of the “Avadhana technical branch” can be used as spy agents.

10. The students can perform well in competitive examination if they understand the secrets of memory power.

11. People develop love towards language and literature.

IV. Challenges or Threats:-

1. There is a comment that the poetic content of the Avadhana poetry is not equal to the modern poetry.
2. There is another comment which says that it is not a progressive poetry but poetry and literary process of middle ages feudal, Jamindari and kings.
3. There is a false notion that the performances are caste-oriented.
4. Even inefficient people earn publicity which provide them money and fame.
5. In the irrelevant witty speeches (Aprasthutha Prasangam) and some other items vulgarity is observed.
6. The compound words (Samaasalu) are used which are not understood by the common public.
7. Some people condemn the propaganda that the Avadhanees have superhuman powers and therefore people prostrate before them and also observe Hero worship.
8. There is a comment that the Avadhanam has become a business item to the avadhanees and the organizers.
9. Some people oppose the modernization of avadhanam.
10. There is a controversial comment that even if there is no memory power the Avadhanees perform avadhanam using Tape recorders computer, written scripts secretly.
11. In some of the avadhanams it seems there is a secret understanding between task masters and avadhanees.
12. In a survey conducted on 29-08-2005 by the daily paper “Eenadu” of Hyderabad district edition on the topic “Ammalantidi Telugu Antha cheda”? (Mother like Telugu is so bitter) revealed that many students do not know about avadhanam. In every 10 students only 3 students know what is avadhanam. By this one can know how avadhana process is distancing itself from modern day youth which is a challenge by itself .

So, modern and future Avadhaees should bear all these comments in mind and proceed to overcoming limitations, using the good qualities of avadhanam and should face the challenges efficiently. They should accept the quality lapses sportively. They should try to perform beyond any comment.

A University in Avadhana education:-

Many people opined that there should be one “avadhana Vidya University”. In 1995 Sri Madagula Nagaphani Sarma while performing “Dwisathavadhanam” in Ravindra Bharati at Hyderabad, the then Chief Minister Sri N.T.Rama Rao announced that in Telugu University there will be ‘Avadhana Vidya Peetam’ and Sri Madagula Nagaphani Sarma will be its President. But it did not materialize due to some technical reasons.

The necessity for starting “Avadhana Vidya Peetam” is very essential. Through this the following functions can be done.

1. The Avadhanalu that took place in the past history, and Avadhanalu that are taking place now can be recorded through Audio and Video recording and can be preserved for the use of future generations.
2. Training can be imparted to interested students on different types of Avadhanalu.
3. The avadhana processes that were recorded previously in history and published in the form of books.
4. On behalf of the Government, avadhana performances can be done in Schools, Universities temples and on some auspicious functions.
5. Encouraging the pundits who made extra-ordinary contribution to Avadhana field.
6. Helping the publication of books in avadhanam.
7. Making the renowned avadhanis to give discourses on Avadhana Vidya and making them publish books.
8. Lessons be prepared in school curriculum on Avadhana Vidya as lessons in school syllabus.
9. Making research and conducting training classes on Mono-dwi and Trigamous learning.
10. Establishing memory lab.

11. Making research on four types of poetry.
12. Conducting “Work shops” on ‘Avadhana Vidya’ (Education)
13. Helping financially to the aged Avadhana Extempore pundits.
14. The students of Avadhana should be given decent money and other facilities.
15. The teachers who teach Telugu in Schools should be made to have proper knowledge on Avadhana Vidya and steps should be taken in this aspect.

Responsibilities of Avadhanees :-

Avadhanam is very popular today. The reason for this is the performance of previous Avadhanees who were very efficient. They should transmit this knowledge to future generations. The Tirupati Venkata kavulu in 20th Century have produced a number of students on avadhanam and similarly in 21st Century also Avadhanees should produce such students. They should train the students about the intricacies of Avadhana. They should publish secrets of ‘Avadhana in the form of books. They should perform Avadhanam with explanations, Both Government and private institutions should encourage and support Avadhana. Avadhanam should not be money-oriented but mass oriented. In such a case only ‘Avadhana Vidya’ flourishes with flying colours.

Some of the Contemporary Avadhanees from 1950

| Year | Name of the Avadhani |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. March. 2. 1950 | Gandluri Dattatreya Sarma |
| 2. June. 3. 1951 | Suram Srinivasulu. |
| 3. June. 4. 1951 | Tigulla Srihari Sarma. |
| 4. May. 1. 1951 | Paravasthu Danunjaya. |
| 5. July. 4. 1952 | Madduri Srirama murthy. |
| 6. 1953 | Panathula Rameswara sarma. |
| 7. April 4, 1955 | Medasani Mohan |
| 8. February. 1.1951 | Kota Lakshmi Narasimham. |
| 9. November.3.1956 | Kota Rajasekhar |
| 10. May.27.1956 | Avadhanam Sudhakara Sarma. |
| 11. July.17.1956 | Ayachitham Nateswara Sarma. |
| 12. July. 1.1956 | Kadimella Varaprasad. |
| 13. October.3. 1957 | Palaparthi Syamalanand Prasad. |
| 14. February.25.1957 | G.M.Ramasarma. |
| 15. August. 5. 1958 | Abbireddy Perayya Naidu. |
| 16. September.14.1958 | Garikapati Narasimha Rao. |
| 17. June.8. 1959 | Madagula Nagaphani Sarma. |
| 18. 1945. | Parimi Rama Narasimham. |
| 19. August.2. 1944 | Aasavadi Prakasa Rao. |
| 20. | Maddiparthi Padmakar. |

